

**SECONDARY ENGLISH IN THE AUSTRALIAN  
CURRICULUM: English teachers' perspectives  
of implementation in Tasmanian Schools**

Thesis by

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## **Declaration of originality**

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The research associated with this thesis abides by the international and Australian codes on human and animal experimentation, the guidelines by the Australian Government's Office of the Gene Technology Regulator and the rulings of the Safety, Ethics and Institutional Biosafety Committees of the University.

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This research, a qualitative case study (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Stake, 2006), focuses on the implementation processes of the *Australian Curriculum: English* in Tasmanian secondary schools 2012-2015. Curriculum reform, in Australia particularly, has often been difficult (Garsed, 2013; Marsh, 2009). Government control of the curriculum and education standard benchmark testing has resulted in reduced teacher agency. Teachers are only marginally included in the process of curriculum reform. Exclusion of teachers has a significant impact on classroom practice (Rowan, 2012b). This research is vital for consideration of future educational reform processes.

The data for this research were obtained from eight schools which represented the three Tasmanian education sectors. This research has two main aims. Firstly, to describe Tasmanian teachers' perspectives of the implementation of the mandated *Australian Curriculum* and, secondly, to explore what professional needs teachers perceive as necessary to improve teacher practice during curriculum reform. Data were gathered from teacher participant questionnaire responses, follow-up semi-structured interviews, and extant texts.

Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000, 2001, 2006) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001b, 2003) underpinned by poststructural feminist theory (Foucault, 1980, 2003), were used to determine and examine the dominant themes from the data. The themes which emerged from the employment of constructivist grounded theory were reconstructed into dominant discourses. The dominant discourses are informed by poststructural feminist theory (Foucault, 2003; Gee, 2011; Gee & Handford, 2012; Hiller, 1998). This research into teacher perspectives of education reform revealed tensions located in the Tasmanian educational system, particularly in schools.

This research exposes the need for further research into the most appropriate reform processes to enhance professional capital (Darling-Hammond, Wilhoit, & Pittenger, 2014; Rogers, 2002a). This research contributes to the literature surrounding education reform experiences of teachers in the Tasmanian context, but also has implications for education reform globally.

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Amazingly, the time has come to breathe and look forward to another adventure. It is also the time to reflect on the bigger picture of why I began this journey – equity in education for teachers and students.

*For the greater good, always.*

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## Acronyms

AC	Australian Curriculum
AC: E	Australian Curriculum: English
ACARA	Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACSA	Australian Curriculum Studies Association
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
TCEO	Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (education sector)
DoE	Tasmanian Department of Education (education sector)
ELs	Essential Learnings Curriculum
IST	Independent Schools Tasmania (education sector)
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
PD	Professional development
PL	Professional learning

## Education Terms

### Secondary school:

Secondary school in Tasmania is designed for grades 7 to 10, for students generally 12 to 16 years of age. Academic areas such as English are typically taught separately by subject specialists. Secondary schools are usually separated from primary schools (Preparatory to grade 6) and colleges (senior secondary grades 11 and 12).

There are three main education sectors in Tasmania:

### Tasmanian Department of Education:

State school education is organised by the Tasmanian Department of Education. Schools are funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Commonwealth Governments.

### Tasmanian Catholic Education Office:

Tasmanian Catholic education schools are under the care of the Tasmanian Archdiocese. The Catholic education system is organised by the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO), and schools are partially funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Commonwealth Governments.

### Independent Schools Tasmania (IST):

Independent Schools Tasmania cares for some non-government member schools. Schools in this system are partially funded by the Tasmanian and Australian Commonwealth Governments. There are three Catholic schools in this sector.

## Introduction to the Research

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### 1.0 Introduction

Improving education standards through education curriculum reform is increasingly important, where teachers are central stakeholders in the implementation of reform. The demand for reform is becoming more frequent, rushed, and more intensive. Teachers are described “as activists and change agents in [education]” (Carrington, Deppeler, & Moss, 2010, p. 4) during education reforms. Teachers are crucial in the implementation of curriculum, yet during reform they are often ignored. Teachers are expected to implement reform, without questioning the reform processes. Teachers assume the responsibility of implementing curriculum into the classroom where the “success of an implementation appears to hinge upon the capacity of teachers to cope with the changes expected of them” (Hackett, 2007, p. 3). The same factors which contribute to education success and failure such as “gap[s] in educational provision” (Hooley, 2005, p. 47) for teacher subject knowledge that were identified in the 1970s remain. Rowan suggests that, in education, the “[f]actors relating to socio-economics, cultural identity, [...and], language, [...] continue to impact upon education pathways and achievements” (Rowan, 2012b, p. 6), including in the implementation of educational reform.

The new national *Australian Curriculum* was introduced in 2009, implemented in phases from 2011 onwards. The implementation was directed by the different education sectors within their jurisdictions. Curriculum reform plagues the Australian school system, adding to the workload and fatigue of teachers (Carlopio, 1998), with Gardner and Williamson (2011) noting that “[t]he

time is ripe for investigating possibilities that have the potential to ameliorate the effects of external policy turbulence” (online).

The Australian Government’s 2014 review of the 2012 or fourth version of the *Australian Curriculum* (Australian Government, 2014b) stresses the importance for further research into the finer details of education reform, including that:

Australia will not match high-performing countries until we take a more comprehensive approach to the many facets of schooling, identify the strengths and weaknesses in various parts of the system, and achieve closer and more productive linkages amongst the components. Even with the best curriculum in the world, high performance will not be attained if other parts of the system are not performing and are not well linked. (p. 81).

The researcher’s view is supported by the 2014 review, which recognises that the issues of curriculum implementation process for stakeholders, including teachers, must be considered for the curriculum to meet high quality education standards. Further, the 2014 review indicates that research is needed in Australia to examine the decentralised curriculum implementation processes:

Both Germany and the United States would seem to place far greater emphasis than Australia on the conduct of curriculum research through national government action. The Australian approach, which has produced a rudimentary national curriculum, is still predicated on the states retaining the ‘how’ of curriculum delivery, even if they have ceded a joint role for the federal government in determining the ‘what’ of curriculum content. (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 87)

These curriculum implementation processes differ according to each jurisdiction, in which the:

state and territory curriculum and school authorities determine timelines for implementation, taking into account the needs of their systems, schools and teachers. State and territory curriculum and school authorities present the curriculum to teachers in ways appropriate to their context, and are responsible for providing teaching and learning and assessment advice. (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2014c, p. 7).

This suggests that there is a need to examine different education jurisdictions to provide appropriate support for teachers in order to facilitate sustainable education reform. Notably, the review asserted that “the manner in which the *Australian Curriculum* has been achieved is the subject of a good deal of criticism” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 88). The main criticisms of the *Australian Curriculum* have been that negotiations were unbalanced with different jurisdictions demanding “adaption to suit their contexts and others delaying the starting date” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 92) of the implementation. This is of concern if a jurisdiction is not equally represented by stakeholders on the curriculum development panel for policy and content negotiations. However, ACARA suggest that this is an issue of the control of knowledge, with selection of subject area advisory groups for implementation, done with “emphasis [-] on expertise rather than representation” (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2012, p. 14). The review stated that “consultative processes conducted by ACARA were uneven, often unresponsive to concerns, focused on deadlines at the expense of collaboration, and the rationale for decisions on curriculum material was not transparent” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 95). A major criticism in the 2014 review of the national curriculum by the Australian Government, was “that there were two expert groups involved in construction of the curriculum – advisers and writers. In some cases the two groups never met” (Australian

Government, 2014b, p. 96), indicating lack of appropriate stakeholder consultation and process transparency. Alarming, teacher “feedback to ACARA was ignored” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 98) and not fully observed or consolidated by ACARA, with issues left unresolved. The 2014 review of the Australian Curriculum aligns with the focus of this research, which observes that teachers are not represented in the curriculum implementation processes, citing that:

ACARA was not concerned enough about the teaching of the discipline, but rather just the discipline itself – they say that there should have been more primary school teachers in the writing teams. An overall framework paper based on more representative inclusion of practitioners could have foreseen these issues. (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 99).

Assertions, which criticise the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum* highlight the need for exploration of education reform processes in the different jurisdictions of Australia.

To examine these assertions, this research explores the perspectives and needs of secondary English teachers involved in curriculum implementation in a Tasmanian context. Part of this research aims to show that teachers should be included with the capacity to voice and shape who determines appropriate resources or the ‘what’ and ‘how’ (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 87) for curriculum content for greater teaching practice equity. Rowan (2012a) suggests that the recording of teacher perspectives “supports the development of interventions and educational practices that demonstrate familiarity with the long and complex history of equity-based educational reforms and which are therefore well aware of the value of small, targeted strategic interventions” (p. 2), which will assist in future educational reform implementation processes. Garsed (2013) noted in his Tasmanian study that the “inclusion of teachers in decision-making for change implementation” (p. 141) remains as an issue in the education system.



The above extracts from the final review of the *Australian Curriculum* by the Australian Government emphasise the critical need to give a platform for teacher voice in education to address the pragmatic aspects of education reform for teachers.

This research explores how secondary school English teachers are impacted by the intensity that education reform brings to their already demanding workloads (Gardner & Williamson, 2011; Shine, 2015; Vostal, 2015). The need to record and explore teacher perspectives of change in regard to their workload is important (Williamson & Gardner, 2015).

The research examines how the broader education system may include teachers who are not currently included in reform discussions, to “translate into teachers becoming central players in establishing educational policy, nor are they necessarily able to shape professional practice in their own schools” (Bangs & Frost, 2012, p. 2). The research explores if teachers express the need for greater autonomy and professional agency (Garsed, 2013).

The research aims and purpose for exploring teacher views during the curriculum reform in Tasmanian education during 2012 to 2015 are introduced in this chapter. The history of educational reform in Tasmania and the tensions produced during reform, are important in this research. The poststructural feminist theoretical framework, the methodological processes of the research, and the data analysis approaches used in the research are also briefly described.

## **1.1 Research aims and purpose**

Teachers’ perspectives of the implementation of curriculum reform are under-researched nationally. This research uses a qualitative case study research approach, which analyses the professional perspectives and needs of Tasmanian secondary school English teachers working during the 2012-2015 implementation

of the *Australian Curriculum: English (AC: E)*. The literature review reveals limited studies relating to Tasmanian teachers, particularly for the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum*. This research adds to the corpus of literature focusing on teachers' experience of education reform in specific jurisdictions.

This case study utilises the views of Tasmanian teachers during a period of reform to examine the research's two interrelated aims. The two main aims of this case study are to:

- i) explore a cohort of Tasmanian secondary schools' qualified practising English teachers' perspectives of the experience of the implementation processes used in the implementation of the new *Australian Curriculum: English*, to identify the impact of the implementation on their professional practice
- ii) identify areas of pragmatic support and professional development necessary for practising Secondary English teachers in Tasmania during curriculum reform.

The research aims to facilitate discussion about the challenges of curriculum reform for teachers and will critically explore the wider issues relating to teaching practice during education reform.

Research Aim One explores how Tasmanian teachers perceive the experience of the implementation process of the new *Australian Curriculum: English* (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2014b, 2014d) and how these processes impact teacher practice. It explores the elements of education reform processes that are recognised by teachers as requiring additional consideration by superordinate stakeholders.

Research Aim Two explores the professional needs of teachers during reform. The research explores specific pragmatic and conceptual professional requirements as described by teachers, which are expected of teachers by superordinate education stakeholders during reform. It aims to show teacher

needs for implementation of reform. These needs are identified by teachers, as essential for curriculum reform and teaching practice.

The purpose of this research is to reveal the perspectives of Tasmanian teachers during education change. The 2011 implementation of the *Australian Curriculum* was a momentous shift in Australian education history. Relevant stakeholders' experience of implementation including teachers from specific jurisdictions, such as Tasmania must be acknowledged.

The terminologies 'superordinate' and 'subordinate', which are used in this thesis, are important in identifying education stakeholder roles and accountabilities. Superordinate stakeholders are those who hold the power over professional structural aspects of institutions and implementation processes. Structural aspects focus primarily on pragmatic arrangements such as time, funding for resources, and policy mandate. Though other stakeholders can interrupt and question reform processes, the subordinate stakeholders such as teachers, typically carry out the duties delegated by the relevant, but typically internal, superordinate stakeholders of school sites. The research is important for school policy makers in the planning of professional development for the curriculum and its implementation processes (Australian Government, 2014b). It is intended to assist school level administrators through insights into how to maximise use of professional learning resources.

## **1.2 Background and context of reform**

This section gives a brief introduction to the history of educational reform in Australia and an introduction to professional capital, which influences teachers' professional capacity and develops teacher agency. This section explores the professional value or skill that teachers bring to their practice. The background of

this research explores the role of context, the stakeholders, and the impact of reform processes in education, considered by the researcher as vital for effective educational change. The following section also provides a brief historical overview of education reform in Tasmania and Australia, focusing on major historical education reforms including the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum* innovation of the 2009-2015 period.

### **1.2.1 Teacher agency**

The relevant professional knowledge and experience that an individual brings to an organisation is known as professional capital. Professional capital influences professional capacity and develops professional agency for teachers (Fullan, 2016). Professional capacity is the teacher's ability and skill-set, which in turn, influences teacher agency (Fullan, 2016). Teacher agency is the teacher's sense of authority or professional expertise that empowers "teachers to act purposefully and constructively to direct their professional growth and contribute to the growth of their colleagues" (Calvert, 2016, p. 52).

Teacher agency also comes from a supportive professional environment. Teacher agency is shaped by teachers' context and their teaching skills, which encourage professional inclusion and growth (Fullan, 2016; Woodhall, 1987). This research explores whether the supports that are put in place or made accessible to stakeholders such as teachers, create a culture of respect and value for the knowledge and experience within teachers' agency. The professional value that teachers possess, can be exported and collegially invested locally or further afield. Greenlee and Karanxha (2010) suggest that empowerment for teacher agency is problematised when teacher agency is not actively valued by stakeholders, for example where opportunity for collaboration for support during reform is reduced.

Further research into teacher perspectives of reform processes serves as a means to understand how better to support teachers during educational reform. In Tasmania there appears to be an increasing need to examine and improve collaborative forms of professional learning for teachers to facilitate curriculum reform, if there is a deficit in professional learning support and collaborative practice for teachers (Dyment, Morse, Shaw, & Smith, 2014).

It is important to examine teacher agency, in order to increase understanding of the professional impact that educational reform has on teachers in specific contexts such as Tasmanian secondary schools. Lack of support for teacher agency can create risk of teacher burnout or attrition (Lim & Eo, 2014), particularly during the additional workload of reform. Lack of professional support can leave teachers professionally isolated, uncertain, and disregarded by colleagues (Stone-Johnson, 2016).

This research explores the view that professional capacity, which influences teacher agency, should be supported with internal and external structures for teachers. It also explores the view that support for teachers is influential to teachers' perspectives of teacher agency, which may also support and develop teacher confidence for practice. This research examines teacher perspectives and their value in reviewing reform processes. This research aims to explore how a national mandate is adopted by teachers in some specific education contexts. As Fullan and Hargreaves (2012) suggest that examining reform process or "investing in long-term professional capital [(which impacts teacher agency)] among all teachers for everyone's achievement, rather than pursuing short-term business-capital interests that reduce the cost and tenure of teachers" (p. 3) will benefit all education stakeholders for the present and the future.

### **1.2.2 Curriculum Reform in Tasmania**

Curriculum reform has been a frequent occurrence of Tasmanian educational history. This section presents a brief historical overview of educational change in Australia and Tasmania, focusing on the major reforms. It sets the context for the proceeding sections of this research, relevant to the research focus of exploring teacher perspectives of, and needs for, educational reform.

#### ***1.2.2.1 A brief history of major reforms in Tasmanian education***

This research is informed by previous research and history of educational change in Australia and Tasmania. The initiation of a national curriculum ideology began in 1973 (Fraser, 1997) when the Australian National Curriculum Development Centre was founded. The English curriculum was included in the national approach, in addition to the subjects Social Science and Asian Studies, when Australia had a keen interest in Asia (Fraser, 1997).

An influential review of Tasmanian education curriculum and structural supports for teachers within government schools, was published after the Role of School in Society Committee was established by the Education Department of Tasmania (1968). The review examined the status of education in Tasmania, with detail pertaining to curriculum content and provisions for teachers to practise. The recommendation from the committee was for mandated guidance for curriculum content and resourcing, via the Australian Government, with the teachers to abide by rigid content inclusion without professional negotiation. Watt's (2006) historical review of Tasmanian education sector control, found that the strict curriculum guidelines for practice in education have been politically driven and stifling for teachers, citing that such a dogmatic approach restricts professional control for educators.

In 1976 the Tasmanian Government established a review into the direction of education, to address the needs of local communities (Tasmanian Education: Next Decade Committee & Tasmania Education Department, 1978). The Tasmanian Education Department (1978) did this to refine content and processes, and recommended supporting teachers with curriculum development resources, consultancy or mentorship, and professional development provisions. A series of reviews followed through the 1980s with focus on English literature content to improve literacy outcomes of students. It was in 1985 that education reform in Tasmania was reviewed again and perceived as being unable to provide relevant or sufficient resources via superordinate stakeholders, to support teachers through and after change (Phillips, 1985). Tasmania's history of fractured and unsupported education reform indicates the need for focused examination of reform for teachers in Tasmania through the use of a case study approach. Education reform with a case study account of local and systemic idiosyncrasies is vital in stakeholders' preparation for and work with change. The specific details of how to support teachers in Tasmania are explored appropriately through the use of a case study approach. In 1987, the Education Department of Tasmania convened education stakeholders, including teachers, to discuss and reach agreement on the core curriculum elements that secondary schools should offer (Education Department of Tasmania, 1987). This led to the creation of education policy in Tasmania to include teachers as part of a progressive education system, in which it was noted that the skills needed for teachers to be included effectively in mandated change required teacher development, are "competencies [which] take time to acquire and that teachers should work to improve their competencies" (Education Department of Tasmania, 1987, p. 7) and that:

Teachers must continually update their knowledge to ensure what the students are taught is what they need to know. Teachers need the skills that enable them to act as effective tutors [..., and that] All schools should

implement a continuous program for staff development” (Education Department of Tasmania, 1987, p. 7)

In 1988 a Commonwealth Government report, *Strengthening Australia's Schools* (Dawkins, 1988), was released drawing connection between education and employment, encouraging national curriculum approaches. However, the Australian education system was described negatively as one that looked to change educational structures to suit government needs, where corporate federalism was necessitated in order to address Australia’s economic recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s (Lingard, O'Brien, & Knight, 1993), and that “schooling policy must be considered as something more than a microeconomic reform tool” (Lingard et al., 1993, p. 244).

The 1990 *Cresap's Final report* (Cresap (Firm) & Patmore, 1990) recommended a reduction in funding for Tasmanian education, which was observed and framed by the then Tasmanian government to increase self-management or autonomy of schools, through the devolved restructuring of the Tasmanian education bureaucracy. The reduced budgetary measures for education in Tasmania, including infrastructure and staffing, were later reported to have resulted in a reduction of resource availability, particularly for secondary schools (Australian Parliament House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Training, 2010). Further, the impact of the *Cresap's Final report* (Cresap (Firm) & Patmore, 1990) financial recommendations which reduced access to resources for teachers, was reviewed as also impacting the transparency and efficiency of information delivery for teachers regarding their roles in educational reform processes. It was the transparency between education stakeholders, particularly for teachers, that Bennett and Associates noted “should be available to all concerned with this vital debate” (Bennett & Associates, 1990, section 10). In Tasmania, a changing and confused education curriculum was the result of the political mandate, where “curriculum expertise was ‘gutted’”. What



followed was a decade of wilderness and wasteland in respect to system-wide curriculum development and implementation” (Rodwell, 2009, p. 114).

Additionally, Hull (1994) writes that the limited provision of resources for teachers resulted in the “lowering of teacher numbers on the one hand, and increased expectations, greater workload” (p. 30) on the other. The Australian Education Council – established in 1936, refused the 1988 Dawkins report which endorsed the implementation of a national curriculum, because it was deemed at the time that a national approach did not support local education issues. As a result, the government “scuttle[d] the nationally consistent curriculum project” (Ebert, 1993, p. 63). By 1994, the *Australian National Statements and Profiles* (Australian Education Council, 1994) document detailing curriculum content in core subject areas, had been commissioned by the Australian Education Council and released by the Curriculum Corporation to be trialled by the states.

Tasmania’s experience of the implementation of the *Australian National Statements and Profiles* (Australian Education Council, 1994), was comprehensively reviewed again in 1997 (Pullen). In contrast to Phillips’ (1985) report, Pullen’s 1997 report found that resourcing for teachers was thorough and supported with relevant materials to assist their practice. Eltis (1995) found that an outcomes-based education which looks at summative rather than formative education approaches in teaching and which is now called a standards approach (Donnelly, 2007), was challenging for Australia. Outcomes-based or standards approach to teaching had not been trialled elsewhere, and an absence of beneficial evidence of its usefulness for teachers and students, was considered problematic.

McGrath and Rowan (2012) note that “[c]urriculum has been constantly and publicly reviewed [... and that] the endless reviews and constant scrutiny have helped to naturalise approaches to education that are frightening in their allegiance to a ‘back to basics’ approach to educational crisis” (p. 68). This suggests that localised and focused teacher perspectives need to be acknowledged

in order to afford good educational reform transition and appropriate implementation for teachers, to avert problematic reform processes in schools.

Between 2000 and 2003, an inclusive consultative group organised by the Tasmanian Government set out to work with stakeholders to create a relevant curriculum to enhance learning outcomes (Watt, 2006). In 2005, the Australian Government's Schools Assistance Act (2004), was implemented nationally and included a simplified, plain language set of Statements of Learning for English (Curriculum Corporation, 2005) for schools. The Statements of Learning for English (Curriculum Corporation, 2005) were designed to instil curriculum consistency across Australian schools, to be implemented by 2008. The Tasmanian government saw value in this approach to curriculum.

The Tasmanian government and education authorities' approval of the Statements of Learning (2004) and preference for differentiated curriculum (Watt, 2005; Watt, 2006), resulted in production of a curriculum for Tasmanian education, the *Essential Learnings Framework* (Tasmanian Department of Education, 2009). This curriculum framework was supported with professional learning resources to prepare teachers for implementation (Watt, 2007). Effective processes, including regular communication and management were provided for stakeholders in a hierarchical and responsive process, but in an inclusive manner where teachers were consulted about and assisted during the curriculum change (Watt, 2007). Notably, Watt (2006) asserts that the effectiveness of supports for teachers including "curriculum resources, [and] professional learning" (p. 37), enabled teachers to feel involved and catered for through acknowledgement of issues as they arose, particularly in the state's Department of Education schools. Further supports existed around assessment processes, where moderation and teachers' collegial interaction were sufficiently provided for.

Although the *Essential Learnings* curriculum was well supported for implementation, it did not remain as the curriculum for Tasmanian education.

The main hurdle for the implementation and longevity of the *Essential Learnings* for secondary schools in Tasmania, was that the *Essential Learnings* required subject interconnectivity (Garsed, 2013). This interconnectivity was not easily achieved by teachers who, despite the above, were not well informed about the *Essential Learnings*, or were too time poor to facilitate this. The requirement for combined subject areas was reported to have caused collegial conflict and subject content design difficulty, where some teachers felt inadequately prepared to implement the changes, or disempowered by more vocal or dominant colleagues (Garsed, 2013). In 2006, the general approach of the *Essential Learnings* was criticised as not being progressive or rigorous enough for Australian education (Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), 2006b). The *Essential Learnings* curriculum was replaced in 2006 by the pre-existing and subject specific rather than interdisciplinary, *Tasmanian Curriculum* (Rodwell, 2009). However, Wilson suggested in his work that an interdisciplinary or future perspective, is needed in education (2007). Wilson notes, that if teachers are to add to or be a functioning part of curriculum reform, that they must be fully informed about reform to present “persuasive, comprehensible, challenging and engaging” (p. 7) views to superordinate stakeholders, or teachers would “risk being locked out of the debate unless we find a position, which is both politically realistic and educationally powerful” (Wilson, 2007, p. 7).

Politically, national approaches to education tend to fit the direction of the leading political party and its rhetoric. Federal government political agendas influence the choices made in education and the content of curriculum objectives. Vitally, in 2003 political ultimatums from Australian federal government leaders promised to withhold education funding from the States and Territories which did not conform to national directives. This threat resulted in resentful coerced agreement from education stakeholders. This stakeholder perspective soon shifted with a change from Liberal to Labor party federal government leadership;

from “coercive federalism [to] cooperative federalism” (Reid, 2009, p. 3), where the federal government attempted to repair relationships with the state governments to continue developing the burgeoning national curriculum. The aptly named digital education revolution in 2008 appeared to conveniently connect with the online nature of the Australian Curriculum, through funding for the distribution of technology such as laptops, to schools. This digital education revolution created profitable partnerships for affiliated businesses such as computer companies, software developers, and internet providers. In 2008 a controversial and compulsory national standardised academic benchmark testing regime called the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) was rolled out by ACARA for the government, in primary and secondary schools (Pendergast & Swain, 2013). The “National Assessment Program is aligned to the Australian Curriculum [...and] can be used to reflect on the influence of the curriculum on student learning and achievement” (ACARA, 2014c, pp. 12-13), with government rhetoric asserting its importance in helping students meet global employment and education standards (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008).

Forrest (2014) notes that in Australia, “successive governments have altered [the curriculum] to suit their own needs on the basis that the previous ones had an undue bias in one way or the other.” (p. 27). In light of this, shifts in education are a certainty, since Australian democracy allows for changes in governing political parties, and thus in the direction and curriculum content of education. In Australia, the swings between the election of Liberal party conservatives and Labor party progressives has meant differing justifications for a national curriculum. In 2006, a prominent Liberal party member suggested that a need to “protect the interests of young Australians from trendy educational fads has led to the community turning to the Federal Government to take action” (Rice, 2006, p. 1) and adopt a national curriculum. This guise of protection for

political benefit enabled the creation of a curriculum that suited the conservative Liberal party agenda. For Tasmania, the continued financial dependency on the federal government has meant that any centrally mandated decisions made by the federal government are more frequently agreed to despite teachers' professional differences in perspective and passive objection.


Recognition for the differing curriculum standards between the state jurisdictions of Australia prompted deliberations to find “productive discussion and action in relation to approaches to national curriculum work between all stakeholders” (Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), 2006a, p. 3). The 2006 ACSA symposium (Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), 2006a) recorded that Australian education reform should have greater involvement of teachers compared to that of previous education reforms. Further, the symposium suggested that there should be reasonable implementation timeframes for consultation between stakeholders, adequate resources including funding and professional learning for teachers, and greater accountability for stakeholders including student outcomes (Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA), 2006a).

In 2007 a swift push to create a nationally consistent curriculum was met with the decision by the Australian Federal Government to allow states and sectors to implement a national curriculum. It was recommended to be adapted and tailored to local or internal educational needs more seamlessly, rather than by a rigid national or inflexible process. The 2007 Federalist paper (Council for the Australian Federation, 2007) reviewed Australian educational reform processes, citing that for best practice “autonomy for individual schools and teachers to make professional decisions about curriculum drives the high performance level of a large number of government, Catholic and independent schools across jurisdictions” (Council for the Australian Federation, 2007, p. 20). The same paper acknowledged the importance of flexibility to allow content and methods to

be differentiated amongst schools and teachers, to adapt to the needs of students. Autonomy for teachers under a federal mandate was pushed as a vital aspect for enduring reform (Council for the Australian Federation, 2007).

The *Tasmanian Curriculum*, which focused on a holistic and subject specific curriculum design, dominated in Tasmania until the introduction of the *Australian Curriculum* in 2012, with its preparation for implementation for stakeholders commencing in 2011. The timeline of implementation for the *Australian Curriculum* is shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1. State and Territory Foundation to Year 10 *Australian Curriculum* Implementation Timeline

	
<b>TASMANIA (Independent Schools)</b>	
<b>2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools prepared for implementation from 2011 but at different levels and in varied contexts.</li> <li>Professional learning was available to prepare for English, mathematics, science and history. There was collaborative planning for English and mathematics across sectors.</li> </ul>
<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing professional learning will be available to all schools. Implementation of English, mathematics, science and history with English, mathematics and science to be classrooms Foundation to Year 10 and supported by the 1ST Curriculum Project Officer.</li> </ul>
<b>2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English, mathematics, science and history will be implemented and taught in classrooms Foundation to Year 10.</li> </ul>
<b>2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English, mathematics, science and history are taught in classrooms across all levels to Year 10 using the Australian Curriculum.</li> <li>Implementation of geography by the end of the year.</li> <li>Trialling of health and physical education during the year.</li> </ul>
<b>2015</b>	To be determined.
<b>2016</b>	To be determined.
<b>TASMANIA (Catholic Schools)</b>	
<b>2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teacher professional learning was available. Preparation was provided for all phase 1 learning areas.</li> </ul>
<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full implementation with English, mathematics, science and history being taught in classrooms in all levels to Year 10.</li> </ul>
<b>2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All four phase 1 learning areas will be taught in classrooms across all levels to Year 10 using the Australian Curriculum.</li> </ul>
<b>2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All four phase 1 learning areas will be fully implemented across all levels to Year 10 using the Australian Curriculum. Geography will be taught in classrooms across all levels using the Australian Curriculum.</li> </ul>
<b>2015</b>	To be advised.
<b>2016</b>	To be advised.
<b>TASMANIA (Government Schools)</b>	
<b>2011</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This was a preparation year for phase one subjects - English, mathematics and science. History was introduced.</li> <li>The three sectors worked together and shared plans.</li> </ul>
<b>2012</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full implementation of three learning areas with English, mathematics and science being taught in classrooms in all levels to Year 10.</li> </ul>
<b>2013</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full implementation of history.</li> <li>English, mathematics, science and history will be taught in classrooms across all levels to Year 10 using the Australian Curriculum.</li> </ul>
<b>2014</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English, mathematics, science and history are taught in classrooms across all levels to Year 10 using the Australian Curriculum.</li> <li>Full implementation of geography by the end of the year.</li> <li>Trialling of health and physical education during the year.</li> </ul>
<b>2015</b>	To be determined.
<b>2016</b>	To be determined.
<small>State and Territory F-10 Australian Curriculum Implementation Timelines – as advised by relevant authorities July 2014</small>	

*Note.* Adapted from “*State and territory implementation of the Foundation to Year 10 Australian Curriculum (online)*,” by Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), (2014d). Copyright 2014 by ACARA.

This timeline shows that there was a brief introduction to the Australian Curriculum for teachers, with differing approaches and levels of stakeholder collaboration in the process across the three Tasmanian education sectors. The

three Tasmanian education sectors recognised the need for a unified approach to help them shift from the earlier Tasmanian Curriculum and develop understanding of the new curriculum, but each of the three sectors also held localised authority over the implementation processes and practise of it.

The research reported was carried out commencing from the end of 2012 through to mid-2015, and included the gathering of *AC: E* relevant resource texts (extant texts), and the collection of questionnaires completed by, and semi-structured interviews held with, volunteer English teacher participants from south-east Tasmanian secondary schools. This data collection timeframe enabled an up-to-date examination of how teachers felt about the *Australian Curriculum* implementation process.

### **1.2.3 Implementing the Australian Curriculum**

The *Australian Curriculum* implementation mandate was supported by the Australian government, and was hailed as a vital structure that would improve student outcomes through a national approach to meet future global employment and market demands (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008). The proposed reform was intended to be interpreted by education sectors within each Australian state and territory, then controlled by schools, which are managed by internal superordinate stakeholders such as school leadership teams, incorporating their own lines and processes of management (Moore, 2007).

The Australian National Curriculum Board was rebranded and established as the *Australian Curriculum*, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) in 2009. ACARA was chartered by the Australian government to “develop and administer a national school curriculum, including content of the curriculum and achievement standards for school subjects specified” (Standing Council on School

Education and Early Childhood, 2012, p. 1), and to ensure provision of “school curriculum resource services, educational research services, and other related services” (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority Act 2008 (Cth.), p. 1), from August 2012 onwards. Section three of the ACARA charter (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, 2012) stipulates that ACARA supports the school authorities in the following ways:

### **3 Strategic directions and work priorities**

#### **General priorities:**

- Establish and maintain ACARA’s position as an authoritative and accessible national resource for all key stakeholders. This will involve the Authority in informing, strengthening and promoting general community understanding of the significance of national curriculum, assessment and reporting processes to achieve improved educational outcomes for all Australian students.
- Work closely with Education Services Australia and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to provide innovative and cost effective educational services across all sectors of education.

#### **Curriculum priorities**

- The most effective processes for implementing and sustaining the national curriculum within the states and territories
- The most effective processes for ensuring the continuous improvement of Australia’s national curriculum reflecting evidence and experience as the curriculum development work continues and the curriculum is implemented



- The support required for states and territories to implement national curriculum as it is developed, including teaching resources and teacher professional development
- How the achievement standards and annotated work samples provided as part of the national curriculum can support nationally consistent teacher professional judgement and A-E reporting to parents. (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, 2012, pp. 2-3)

These stipulations of the charter are broad enough to allow state and sector adaptation of the *Australian Curriculum*. They highlight the basic provisions such as *Australian Curriculum* information which serves as professional learning, which ACARA prepared mostly online, for teachers before and during reform to inform teachers of what resources are available for the teachers. The provisions include professional resourcing for teacher consultation and feedback, and for general professional development including for assessment. What is not stated in the provisions, however, are the details of professional learning offerings, nor the authorities that would facilitate such. These necessary provisions were intended to be directed by the state and education sector authorities within them (Council for the Australian Federation, 2007).

ACARA's charter (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, 2012) highlighted its relationship with stakeholders, including the closely affiliated Education Services Australia (ESA) and the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL). These mid-level superordinate stakeholders are responsible for provision of resources and identifying teaching standards respectively. The ESA supports the delivery of national priorities and

initiatives such as the *Australian Curriculum* in schools, by providing access to professional learning and a collection of educational resources for teachers (Educational Services Australia, 2015). The ESA works closely with the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to facilitate resources for AITSL. AITSL is an education research organisation, funded by the Australian Government, which provides research and direction for school leadership and teacher education. The AITSL *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* is a list of teaching benchmarks, which assess the proficiency of the teachers within their roles. Embedded in these standards are indicators of how teachers are able to access and incorporate learning resources for their students and to enhance professional capital, thus teacher agency. The standards also provide an evaluation or rubric of teaching standards with varying competencies for Graduate, Proficient, Highly Accomplished, and Lead teachers, including benchmarks for pedagogical content knowledge, practice, professional engagement, and accountabilities. Within these standards are aspects of practice, including ability to access and adapt resources to accommodate students, and to meet or “Comply with legislative, administrative and organisational requirements” (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2015, section 7.2). Schools are guided by the AITSL Teacher Standards for professional administrative purposes (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2015). This research explores teacher experience of the mandated *Australian Curriculum* reform, and what provisions teachers perceive as necessary for the implementation of the reform to support teachers in their practice.

### **1.3 Study Context and participants, Theoretical position, Methodology and Analysis**

This section briefly outlines the context and participants of the study, the discussion of a poststructural feminist theory position, which informs the research, and the methodological, and data analysis approaches of the research.

#### **1.3.1 Context and participants**

This qualitative case study was carried out during 2012-2015 while the *AC: E* was being implemented in Tasmanian schools. The research sought the perspectives of practising Tasmanian secondary school English teachers on this national curriculum reform. The participating secondary school English teachers were employed in the State Government, Catholic and Independent Tasmanian education sectors within the southeast region of Tasmania.

A case study approach was taken since a small number of participants were available due to their restricted time availability (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Stake, 2006). The participants in the research were of varying teaching experience and backgrounds, but all were practising teachers in Tasmania when the *AC: E* implementation commenced. The teachers' responses provided initial information and experiences of the *AC: E* implementation for teachers, in Tasmanian secondary schools. The participating practicing teachers provided responses to the reform through their insight into the current education environment.

The questionnaire and interview data collected for this research are central to exploring teacher perspectives of, and needs for the implementation of curriculum reform. Relevant *AC: E* documents, or extant texts, were collected and used as supporting data to “complement [-] fieldwork” (Yin, 2014, p. 61) for use in the critical discourse analysis phase of this research.

### **1.3.2 Theoretical position**

Poststructural feminist theory, which informs this research, is used to explore how language, power, and subjectivity impact education during change. More importantly, it allows the examination of how language and power influence teacher perspectives especially during change. Poststructural feminist theory shapes the research, in which teachers provide “accurate representations of themselves” (Yin, 2014, p. 86). Poststructural feminist theory (Derrida, 1978; Foucault, 1979; Lather, 2001; Weedon, 1987) colours this research and assists in the synthesis of the discursive hegemonic issues (Kress, 1985) that are raised by teachers within their education sites and sectors during curriculum reform. Hegemony is concerned with cyclical power relations in social constructs between social groups, such as in educational settings between school leaders and school teachers. Duenkel, Pratt, and Sullivan (2014) posit that hegemony is an important issue for teachers, and note that,

As educators and change agents, explorations of the powerful/powerless dichotomy seemed incumbent upon us, as we were continuously face-to-face with the conundrum of attempting to foster empowerment while embedded in a system in which our role as a teacher is one of the mechanisms by which systemic power is maintained. (Duenkel et al., 2014, p. 268)

This suggests that issues of hegemony are inevitable for teachers who should also be supported in their role as teacher. In turn, the support of teachers will support the education system that they are a part of.

This qualitative research is informed by a poststructural feminist approach, since the combination of independent perspective and feminism, or the questioning of power, enables the discussion of politics and professional practice (McLeod, 2009). A Foucauldian poststructural position is acknowledged by this

thesis, which rejects the concentration on intentional focus and universality. Universality suggests acceptance of a single truth to explain issues of power, which supports oppressive power or social hegemony (Given, 2008). Foucauldian poststructuralism positions the study of human experience and knowledge as subjective discursive practices or concepts (Given, 2008). This position acknowledges that there is no single truth, since language shapes knowledge.

Poststructural feminist theory encourages the elucidation of hegemonic issues, such as those found within school sites and education sectors (McLeod, 2009). In fusing poststructural questioning of context or events and feminist questioning of hegemonic discourses, the deconstructive or critical examination of assumed or normalised practices can be scrutinised (Lather, 1987, 2001; McNay, 1992), or can at “least [...] explain the assumptions underlying the questions” (Weedon, 1997, p. 20). Questioning hegemonic discourses fuses well with feminist theory (Lazar, 2005), which informs and explores subjectivity. This critical approach to exploring discourse, “rescues poststructuralism from [...] exclusions and brings an embodied and more politically engaged perspective to poststructural studies of education. [It] sets feminist and educational theory free from the shackles of essentialism, naïve accounts of power and subjectivity, and the ‘ubiquitous dominance’ of humanism” (St Pierre, 2000, p. 479). This epistemological stance allows for the gaps or silences or otherwise unheard teacher perspectives of curriculum reform in Tasmania to be brought to light through documenting the culture or reform processes of their school sites (Lichtman, 2012). In researching teacher perspectives of educational reform, the ever-changing face of education is able to evolve or become open to critical discussion with an “iterative productivity [...] that is open to permanent dynamism” (Lather, 2006, p. 1) with rigorous poststructural feminist approach. The researcher observes that “power and knowledge directly imply one another”

(Foucault, 1979, p. 27). This perspective acknowledges that stakeholders such as teachers are viewed as possessing valued professional power, which should shape their roles and promote their voice as professionals.

A poststructural feminist theoretical position informs the research, which prioritises an examination of equity for teachers. This approach positions the teacher participants for the researcher, as the authority of their lived experience of curriculum reform in schools. Transparent knowledge or meaning is produced through examination of participant data, which “are to be analysed not on the basis of a subject of knowledge who is or is not free in relation to the power system, but, on the contrary, the subject who knows” (Foucault, 1979, p. 27). This approach identifies hegemonic issues, professional “inclusions and exclusions” (Rowan & Honan, 2005, p. 202), or teacher involvement in educational reform processes, as identified by the research participants and interpreted by the researcher (Foucault, 1979; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Myers, 1997). Poststructural feminist theory is used to inform the exploration of professional equity during national curriculum reform.

Poststructural feminist theory allows for a qualitative, inductive interrogation and researcher’s interpretation of participant data. Poststructural feminist theory is highly applicable to qualitative educational research, wherein contextualised facets of equity, hegemony, or issues of control of teacher practice (Corbin & Strauss, 2015), and the promotion of subordinate stakeholders’ voices are paramount to the exploration of social and structural professional issues in education. Poststructural feminist theory supports qualitative interpretive research where “knowledge of reality is gained only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, documents, tools and other artifacts. Interpretive research does not predefine dependent and independent variables, but focuses on the complexity of human sense making as the situation emerges” (Klein & Myers, 2001, p. 220). Poststructural feminist theory is an

approach that aligns with the use of qualitative critical discourse analysis. It acknowledges that there are multiple meanings of lived experience (Foucault, 1979; Yin, 2003) including of educational reform, which can be found through the use of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) coding processes used by the researcher to make sense of the complex relationships examined (Lather, 2001).

The examined experiences of teachers during educational reform are interpreted and presented by the researcher through a critical discourse analysis. Poststructural feminist theory informs this thesis' use of a critical discourse analysis, as it allows for authentic interrogation of unique contexts with opportunity to explicate otherwise inextricable, complex descriptions (Geertz, 1973) or details of social issues related to professional power and privilege (Weedon, 1997). This provides opportunity for the researcher to develop relevant and appropriate suggestions for stakeholders, or further research.

Poststructuralism accepts different versions or interpretations of experience, whilst examining the particularities of subjective ideographs or participant perspectives of a lived experience (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), such as educational reform. This is an interdisciplinary and relevant approach which allows for discovery of emergent aspects or details of a specific context. Given (2008) notes that "the methodological coalition of hermeneutic and poststructuralist ideas can strengthen interpretation by addressing blind spots" (pp. 152-153) or issues previously unexplored, through a "skein of thought" (Peters & Burbules, 2004, p. 18) or discursive exploration of the studied context. A poststructural feminist approach frames teachers' language as a subjective (Kress, 1988) and partial representation of their experience of education reform through a positioning of teachers in relations of power, ideology, and discourse (Muecke, 1992; Weedon, 1997). It raises and problematises these issues in order to examine or open for debate the

hidden social and professional aspects of teachers' work during education reform. Poststructural feminist theory connects the language it observes with the context it is examining under particular social or hegemonic veneers (Kress, 1989; Weedon, 1997) in order to untangle the studied context.

### **1.3.3 Methodology and Analysis**

This qualitative case study (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Stake, 2006) uses constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001b; Gee, 2011; Wodak, 2009), informed by poststructural feminist theory. This combined qualitative approach facilitates authentic and rigorous interrogation of the data.

The methods used in this research allow the data to show, through the data analysis phases and interpretation by the researcher, how the context and practice of teachers adds to existing discourses (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Weedon, 1997). Constructivist grounded theory adds to theory rather than trying to prove pre-existing findings (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). Constructivist grounded theory is the systematic analysis of data, using inductive "reasoning that begins with a study of a range of individual cases and extrapolates from them, to form a conceptual category" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 188). The discovery and application of concepts are then used by the researcher to determine larger ideas or discourses. The discourses are examined using a critical discourse analysis approach.

Discourses are constructed through the consideration of coded concepts or themes, which then analyse the language that constitutes them. Discourses represent larger issues or meanings from the study context, and "weave the fractured story back together" (Glaser, 1978, p. 72).

The development of discourses as a research process, is an emancipatory qualitative data interrogation method that the researcher uses to organise and



discuss the issues and ideas found in the data. Discourse is the researcher's interpretation of data in amalgamated, organised concepts or statements. A discourse is a "systematically organised set of statements, which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution" (Kress, 1985, p. 7). Discourses express and explore ideologies found in an environment, or through the perspectives of the people within it, where:

The meanings define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not to say (and by extension – what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organises and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. (Kress, 1995, p. 7)

This research uses a critical discourse analysis, informed by Fairclough (Fairclough, 2001a, 2013b). A critical discourse analysis is a scholarly synthesis of information, which "aims to produce interpretations and explanations of areas of social life which both identify the causes of social wrongs and produce knowledge which could (in the right conditions) contribute to righting or mitigating them" (Fairclough, 2013b, p. 8). Thus, a critical discourse analysis informed by a poststructural feminist theory approach, allows the examination of "relations between discourse and other such complex 'objects' including objects in the physical world, persons, power relations and institutions, which are interconnected elements in social activity or praxis" (Fairclough, 2013b, p. 3). This approach assists in "making visible the interconnectedness of things" (Fairclough, 1985, p. 747). Fairclough (2013) makes note that a critical discourse analysis is a transparent approach for data analysis, where:

1. It is not just analysis of discourse (or more concretely texts [data]); it is part of some form of systematic transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and other elements of the social process.
2. It is not just general commentary on discourse; it includes some form of systematic analysis of texts.
3. It is not just descriptive; it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects and possible ways of righting or mitigating them. (pp. 10-11)

Critical discourse analysis aligns with the researcher's openness to subjective interpretation to allow for new insights through the exploration of teacher responses to the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum* in Tasmania. This is a progressive and transparent analytical approach guided by the data, which allows for inquiry into the education context, and examines how the discourses interrupt problematic processes of educational reform for local and wider stakeholders.

## 1.4 Structure of thesis

Following this introduction to the research, there are five chapters. Chapter Two – Literature Review provides a summary of the relevant education literature to position the research in light of recent studies and theory. Chapter Three – Methodology clarifies the two research aims of this study and details the methodological steps taken to collect and interrogate the data. Chapter Four – Data Analysis Processes details the constructivist grounded theory data coding and analysis processes (Charmaz, 2006), and provides examples of these processes used to construct the dominant themes used for the research. Chapter Five – Critical Discourse Analysis reconstructs the dominant themes from the research data, into two dominant discourses. The dominant discourses address the

two research aims. Chapter Six – Conclusion summarises the main research findings and brings theoretical nuances to consideration of the two research aims. The terminologies used in this thesis are relevant to the language used in the literature and methodological approaches informed by poststructural feminist theory.

## **1.5 Summary of Introduction**

The qualitative approaches selected for this research are transparent and inform the research aims, as supported by Yin (2014), who notes that as “qualitative research has no clear typology of blueprints, every qualitative study is therefore likely to vary in its design” (p. 84). The qualitative approaches informed by poststructural feminist theory (Fairclough, 2001a) used in this research, allow for researcher reflexivity to create an authentic account of education reform in Tasmania. This research is guided by the teacher participants to promote the value of teacher perspectives. This approach is supported by Rowan (2012a), to explore educational reform processes which shape the practice of teachers, where “Emotive and powerful terms [...] can have the unanticipated consequence of alienating and demotivating teachers who are already struggling under the weight of ever increasing public scrutiny of what they do and how they do it” (p. 61).

In the Tasmanian context, observation of teacher opinion is crucial in addressing localised issues concerning appropriate support for teachers. Teachers will benefit professionally through meaningful discussion of the issues raised in this research. In the long term, attention to reform processes for teachers will improve student outcomes and teacher workloads (Stack et al., 2011; Tasmanian Department of Education, 2013). Through amplification of the Tasmanian

teacher views into the wider education sphere, there is opportunity to consult and seek solution with national and international bodies to address teacher needs, addressing education standards in Tasmania. For non-Tasmanian stakeholders, the findings address issues likely found in other education settings. This research is a contextualised account of teachers' experience of education reform.

Promotion of teacher perspectives of curriculum reform will assist in the decision-making processes that support teachers and influence the direction of educational change (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015; Ng, 2015; Rogers, 2002a). Through detailed analysis, this research contributes to the literature and the implementation of policy for educational reform and professional practice. This research promotes teachers' perspectives of curriculum reform in Tasmania and the professional equity and inclusion of teachers in their work, particularly during times of educational change.

## **2.0 Introduction**

Education is a site of power and control (Lather, 2001; Torres, 2015), where “schools, students and teachers have long been positioned in a passive relationship to knowledge – as the consumers of materials largely written, determined or authorised by other people” (Rowan, 2012b, p. 3). This research argues that teachers’ views and experiences are being overlooked during education reform, including issues of equitable access to appropriate resources to address policy needs. Most importantly, it is the level of inclusion of teachers in the reform process that requires attention. Hargreaves notes:

In much of the writing on teaching and teachers' work, teachers' voices have either been curiously absent, or been used as mere echoes for preferred and presumed theories of educational researchers. Teachers’ voices, though, have their own validity and assertiveness, which can and should lead to questioning, modification and abandonment of those theories wherever it is warranted. [...] Teachers’ words do not merely provide vivid examples of theories at work. They also pose problems and surprises for those theories. (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 4)

This research argues, in this chapter, that the views of teachers are largely ignored during education reform. The purpose of this chapter is to present pertinent issues surrounding curriculum reform for teachers in Tasmania. Section 2.1 presents elements of education reform, which influence perspectives of mandated change in smaller education communities such as those located in Tasmania. Section 2.2 examines models of reform to frame the approach taken

by superordinate stakeholders to implement the current *Australian Curriculum* being examined. This section explores the position of classroom teachers during education change.

The literature, which informs this research, was located in a variety of sources, which includes online search engines and databases in repositories such as the University of Tasmania, Edith Cowan University, Google Scholar, State Library of Tasmania – *LINC*, and the National Library of Australia. Databases utilised included *CREDO reference*, *EBL – eBook library*, *Education Resources Information Center* (ERIC), JSTOR Arts and Sciences, *ProQuest*, *Science Direct*, *Summons*, *Trove*, and others through *EBSCOHost Education*.

## 2.1 Elements of educational reform

Educational reform for teachers involves interconnected pragmatic and qualitative elements such as reform documents, and consideration of teachers' workload and stakeholder relationships. Elements such as these require support and transparency for teachers to adjust to change. The elements which will be discussed in this section include stakeholder access to resources, stakeholder inclusivity, stakeholder authority including communication and accountabilities, teacher agency and professional capital, and effective structural support. In an Australian Government review of the national *Australian Curriculum* (Australian Government, 2014b), it was noted that the interconnected elements which impact the implementation of curriculum include the above and more specifically:

- curriculum content (national curriculum specifications, textbooks, support materials etc.)
- assessment and qualifications
- national framework-systems (e.g. routes, classes of qualifications)

- pedagogy
- professional development
- institutional development
- institutional form and structures (e.g. size of schools, education phases)
- funding
- governance (autonomy versus direct control)
- accountability arrangements
- selection and gatekeeping (e.g. university admissions requirements [which influence curriculum content]). (p. 42)

These are interconnected elements, which aid the systemic implementation of educational reform. In modifying one element of curriculum reform, the other elements will also be modified (Australian Government, 2014b). It is important to support these elements for stakeholders to work effectively with reform processes. The 2014 review adds, that Australia does not take a holistic approach and that “It is very doubtful that Australia takes this systemic approach to schooling, to some extent because of the fragmentation due to the federal system” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 42). The Tasmanian education context during reform is important to explore, as it is often plays a diminished role from national discussion. The chapter examines teacher perspectives of reform in education communities. These elements of reform differ according to each school site and sector.

### **2.1.1 Resources – Accessibility**

Resource accessibility is crucial for teacher practice as it empowers and facilitates education reform rather than teachers feeling lost or “left behind in the

information flow” (Arató & Lavicza, 2015, p. 145; Ní Chróinín, 2012). The resources that empower and facilitate practice include personal and contextual variants, dependent on the school site or education sector provisions and environment. According to Mansfield and colleagues (2016) personal resources include less tangible elements and they define these as motivational or emotional competence or capacity, as aspects of the teacher which build professional resilience or flexibility. These elements are reported in the literature as often neglected during change, despite “being of crucial importance for teachers in the current age of accountability” (Mansfield et al., 2016, p. 5), and with the regular frequency education reform. Personal resources are the intrinsic forces which teachers draw on, which contribute to the development of the most important aspects of teacher pedagogy, including teacher resilience, efficacy and ability. The professional drive of a teacher is therefore supported by the context in which a teacher works.

The supports for educators during reform are labelled as the collegial aspects (Mansfield et al., 2016) of an organisation. These supports include opportunities for planning, time release to facilitate collegial discussion or professional learning opportunities and increased support through technology, such as the internet or website access and relevant document provision or access. The literature supports the view that these resources are the tools that teachers require for daily teaching practice (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014a). A recent study by Hilton, Hilton, Dole, and Goos (2015) suggests that these resources are particularly important during reform. Their study advocates that “[p]roviding more tangible support such as additional planning time or resources also contributed to teachers feeling more supported, and to processes of enactment” (p. 116). This perspective of support relies on the provisions for teachers by individual schools and the professional culture of the school. Without adequate support, change becomes difficult to implement.



Unsupported change is time consuming, cumbersome, and often undermines professionalism (Appleton, 1999; Hilton et al., 2015; Kenny & Colvill, 2008; Williams & Coles, 2007). This thesis considers that inadequate resourcing for teachers is a professional, personal and contextual disadvantage, which adds to teacher workload, contributes to attrition and poses the question “of whether we really have a national curriculum if we cannot be confident that it is being implemented as intended” (Australian Government, 2014b, p. 112) if resource access differs for teachers. Further, whilst ACARA conveniently provides current core information for the *Australian Curriculum* on their website, some teachers find navigation of these online resources disempowering, as it is tedious and challenging or difficult to access for their specific subject planning needs (Herrington, Reeves, & Oliver, 2005; Wikan & Molster, 2011).

The online version of the *Australian Curriculum* was made available in 2014, in one location for the teachers and the public, “to see what [it] involve[s]” (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2014a, para.8). The online version of the *Australian Curriculum* has made it necessary for teachers to possess an understanding of the technology in order to access the curriculum (Klebansky & Fraser, 2013). This may be problematic for teachers who do not have the skills or who have not been trained in how to access these essential curriculum resources.

The difficulty of access to curriculum resources goes beyond physical manipulation of technology, which suggests that “[t]eachers have to be experts in their fields, as well as mentors and coaches. They must now be a knowledge expert with skills in the facilitation of groups of students, where those activities include the meaningful use of technologies” (Moyle, 2010, p. 2). This lack of access to online resources can however be remediated through professional learning or provision of time to navigate the online curriculum resources. The literature suggests, that familiarity with the required technology is vital, that

“teachers need first to learn well in advance how the technology is helping in a specific [subject] content” (Stoilescu, 2015, p. 525).

Transparent organisation and support by administrators is therefore crucial for teachers’ planning. If the responsibility of the direction of the curriculum implementation is handed from the government to the state and education sector hierarchies, then it follows that this results in a division of resources and access to professional learning for teachers. The OECD report (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2015) suggests that this redirection of materials or funding, “lacks transparency and coherence, and outcomes of numerous studies have shown that it is difficult to determine how individual schools are funded” (p. 4) or resourced. This suggests administrative tension between Australian education sectors and schools for access to resources. Further, the control of funded resources creates a privileging of access to materials or knowledge, “by which subjectivities are forcibly attuned to a social ontology” (Slater, 2015, p. 2). For example, members or employees of different groups or education sectors are either included or excluded from access to certain or sector-controlled resources in a trifurcated system such as in Tasmania, by way of website or repository site login restrictions. This is contrary to the principle of a national curriculum, which propels the ideology that it should be supported by equal access to materials for teachers, since, as Southerland suggests, reform works best when the curriculum is “enacted by a prepared practitioner” (2013, p. 32). Critically, when excluded from professional learning for a broader cause such as a national curriculum, teachers are professionally hindered (Bennison & Goos, 2010).

The literature reveals two dominant tensions regarding the quality or effectiveness of professional learning and access to resources, where superordinate stakeholders expect teachers to be competent and current through assessment of teacher standards and accountabilities (Schuck & Buchanan, 2012),

despite apparent differences in access to curriculum resources for teachers. Moreover, this research argues that this privileging of resources despite the national curriculum agenda disempowers teachers through education sector exclusion and privilege, dependent on their access to curriculum resources. This produces a culture of professional inequality where teachers do not have access to appropriate curriculum resources (Dutta, 2015; Slater, 2015). Fair access to curriculum or education resources for teachers is, therefore, at risk, reducing “equity and dismantling democracy” (Garsed & Williamson, 2010, p. 50). This creates professional tension for teachers. Luke, Iyer, and Doherty (2011) suggest that:

[g]lobalised economies and cultures have shifted the core assumptions of 20th century education: about [...] information and power. This constitutes nothing less than new space for conflict and struggle over whose languages, texts and discourses will have count, who will produce, use and own them, over whose voices will count and be heard, and over who will be excluded and marginalised. (p. 12)

Resources should be freely accessible to all teachers, but those resources which are controlled by organisations, isolate or restrict access. Lack of access forces teachers into accessing materials through other means (Luke et al., 2011). The *Australian Curriculum* is publicly accessible, yet unequal access to pedagogical support including units of English work and subject planning documents for teachers, creates tension for teachers. There are “huge differences in the contexts in which learning happens across Australia, [...] variations in education systems and sectors and the broad range of teacher beliefs about pedagogies and practices, implementation of any mandated content will vary markedly across the country” (Ewing, 2012, p. 100). As such, teachers must have equitable access to resources, provided or clearly organised by the authority that mandates the

reform such as ACARA, in order to meet accountabilities and policy demands (Cosner, Kimball, Barkowski, Carl, & Jones, 2015; Firestone, Nordin, Kirova, & Shcherbakov, 2013; Sala, Matthew, & Knoepfel, 2015). Further, Dilkes, Cunningham, and Gray (2014) suggest, in their Western Australian research, that resistance to reform develops if teachers are unsupported, citing that “appropriate resources and support [that] are available for this new subject matter could also influence teacher experiences with the AC” (p. 48). Teachers should be provided with the relevant curriculum materials to meet new teaching requirements to encourage and improve engagement with the new curriculum.

Hofman suggests in her discussion of approaches to enacting curriculum, that the establishment of a sustainable and enduring curriculum requires the processes of implementation to be tailored to the needs of the education system in which they are applied, where “teaching should be approached in schools, namely, that it should not only focus on content but also on context” (Hofman, 2015, p. 220). The ACARA Charter (Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, 2012) lays out a set of broad curriculum strategic directions and work priorities articulated to accommodate and support implementation in different states and sectors. These priorities include addressing:

- The most effective processes for implementing and sustaining the national curriculum within the states and territories,
- The continuous improvement of Australia’s national curriculum reflecting evidence and experience as the curriculum development work continues and the curriculum is implemented,
- The support required for states and territories to implement national curriculum as it is developed, including teaching resources and teacher professional development,

- Support for teachers for nationally consistent teacher professional judgement and A-E reporting to parents. (p. 3)

According to the 2012 ACARA charter these curriculum priorities are vital for sustainable curriculum reform, as they provide scope for teachers to address curriculum needs locally, giving ownership to the teachers supported by superordinate stakeholders. The education change literature suggests that local stakeholders do the most effective implementation of reform, as they are most aware of or familiar with the needs of their schooling communities (Snow & Williamson, 2015; Wongwanich, Piromsombat, Khaikleng, & Sriklaub, 2015).

Empowerment of teachers during reform is supported through the provisions that facilitate reform for “teachers to become adept in their professional craft” (Southerland, 2013, p. 28). It is important then that teachers understand reform and curriculum requirements in order to support these changes, which also “require standards of practice that can guide professional training, development, teaching, and management at the classroom, school, and system levels, and opportunity to learn standards that ensure appropriate resources to achieve the desired outcomes” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p. 103). The proficient delivery of a new curriculum requires teacher knowledge (Brezicha, Bergmark, & Mitra, 2015), where the provision of resources must be appropriate and supported through effective policy and processes, professional collaboration and development (Darling-Hammond, 2011; Mulford, 2008). Oates (2010) suggests that, “[a] system is regarded as ‘coherent’ when the national curriculum content, textbooks, teaching content, pedagogy, assessment and drivers and incentives all are aligned and reinforce one another” (pp. 138-139) to improve the success of education reform or curriculum implementation. Therefore, it is critical that teachers are provided with accurate, coherent and consistent information. Clarity of information and requirements for reform assists teachers in complying with the

implementation of the new national curriculum. However, compliance is problematic for teacher autonomy and agency.

Fullan (1993) suggests, “change is too important to leave to the experts” (p. 39). This research argues that compliance, or adhering to mandated curriculum change, is a tension for teachers where there is expectation from superordinate stakeholders that directives will be followed without question. However, this is not always possible since capacity to meet demand is dependent on resource accessibility (Jensen, Hunter, Sonnemann, & Cooper, 2014). The literature suggests that access to resource provisions is a major issue for teachers (Williamson & Gardner, 2015). Scott-Curwood, Tomitsch, Thomson, and Hendry (2015) reinforce this, in suggesting that a lack of access to relevant supporting resources impacts teacher ability to work effectively, since “some academics will require more support than others to adapt ideas and strategies” (p. 567) to meet teaching requirements. The acknowledged lack of access to resources, as identified in the literature, suggests that teachers require full or at least greater access to resources to assist their practice rather than being forced to resort to uninformed guesswork to address curriculum changes and to manage their teaching workloads.

### **2.1.2 Stakeholders of education reform**

Education reform requires all stakeholders to be involved to make it viable. Marsh (1997) notes that those involved in curriculum design and implementation “are many and include school-based personnel such as teachers, principals and parents and university-based specialists, industry and community groups and government agencies and politicians” (p. 8). However, the struggle over what is to be included in the curriculum and how it is to be utilised through assessment and reporting, is argued as politically charged and controlled by those

who fund the creation of the curriculum (Barton, Garvis, & Ryan, 2014; McNeil, 2014).

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2015) recognises the Australian education system follows a decentralised scheme. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (2014a) states that decentralised schemes in education policy implementation in decentralised schemes involve handover of authority from the main or central government such as the Australian Commonwealth Government, to local education sectors and school sites. For education change such as curriculum reform, three levels of decentralisation are observed. These include delegation, deconcentration and devolution decentralisation (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2014a).

Delegation decentralisation is the rigid or controlled transmission of core administrative tasks from central or superordinate stakeholder authorities such as ACARA, to national and state education bodies such as the government controlled Tasmanian Department of Education. Here, central authorities deliver mandate to subsidiaries to follow directives to ensure implementation. However, this means that there is little flexibility for subsidiaries in this model, with the literature suggesting that delegation decentralisation sees “loss of professional autonomy, [...] a transmission of tasks and responsibilities related to specific functions usually defined by central authorities, and thus not necessarily involving a real shift in power” (Erss et al., 2014, p. 395). This approach results in a system that directs teachers according to policy needs, resulting in problematic, distanced and exclusive or privileged access to resources including stakeholder communication.

Deconcentration is a more equitable or inclusive model of authority for reform, where state education sectors could administer a more local and suitable approach to management of policy translation, implementation and guidance

(United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2014a). While these local agents have ability to adapt the education changes, final authority remains with the central or major government which funds the education system (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2015).

Devolution decentralisation of authority is a more advanced education administration reform model, which sees local stakeholders such as schools take on the practical responsibility of reform with clear guidelines, where “local authority and independence are clearly increased” (Erss et al., 2014, p.395). Here, the local stakeholders are included in the decision-making processes for reform and their roles and resources within it. Devolution decentralised schemes where implementation is rolled out by localised stakeholders have been suggested in the literature to be effective for schools (Gunter, Hall, & Mills, 2015; Maroy, 2009) since they allow local governance with guidance from superordinate stakeholders, for accountability purposes. Vitally, decentralised models such as those found in Australia must therefore be matched with an accountability scheme, involving a central government or authority such as ACARA, where stakeholders can observe standard procedures for transparent education policy or curriculum reform (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2015). However, Seddon (2014) suggests that the redistribution of decision-making among the stakeholders involved in reform processes results in the need to view local change through a national agenda lens.

Redistribution of decision-making processes will facilitate understanding of national education reform. The literature suggests that a local approach with a broader lens is valuable when teachers are fully involved in the reform process, as it enables thorough examination and consultation of implementation and use of the introduced curriculum, with differentiated or individualised adaption of the curriculum by teachers for their classrooms (Garsed & Williamson, 2010). Teacher involvement in the establishment of localised problem solving for



specific curriculum or reform issues within school sites is also vital (Ashley, 2009). As suggested in the literature, local or devolution decentralisation of implementation is sustainable as it enables tailored transformation of education and empowerment of teachers through “articulating a voice” (Mathieson, 2011, p. 245) and facilitating their involvement in change. Therefore, local understanding of education needs with specific knowledge for a school site enables appropriate implementation and use of a new curriculum.

The *Australian Curriculum* is an Australian federal government initiative, which hands final and local responsibility of the curriculum implementation to the state governments. The education sectors and the schools within them are then entrusted with the organisation and rollout of the reform. The Australian Government (2014b) reported in their final review of the *Australian Curriculum* that the:

Curriculum should not become politicised. This poses a challenge for ministers and their advisers in that they possess ultimate power and responsibility in this domain, but must, at the same time, ensure that curriculum design and delivery operates at arm’s length from the machinery of government, which they oversee, and which is meant to operate on the basis of professional educational expertise. (p. 83)

This implies that despite appearing to pass responsibility to the national, state and local stakeholders, it is the government that funds and has final authority in setting mandate but not in the local organisation or pragmatic implementation of it. While the stakeholder cohort is varied and includes groups with political and personal interests. In curriculum reform, it is the teaching body that ultimately interprets the direction from its superordinate leaders and applies the curriculum change and should be observed as doing so (Cohen & Ball, 1990).

Classroom teachers are the frontline of education reform and practice, and face the issue of what to instruct in their classrooms, to accommodate exogenous

curriculum mandate. Decisions made by teachers are, however, influenced by the tacit or local knowledge and decisions made by their immediate subject or faculty leader, school principal, and leadership of their jurisdiction or education sector. Currie-Knight (2012) suggests that the tacit knowledge of teachers “is difficult to formalize via instructions or rules owing to its personal and often subconscious nature” (p. 121) in addition to the education context in which teachers work, where academically, there exist “wide variants among [students]. Attempts to centralize curricula by deciding on set things that all children must learn in school risk ignoring particularities not only of geography, but of local demand owing to cultural, economic, and other differences” (p. 121). Therefore, local decisions that adapt authority mandate are important to foster. These decisions are made to align with the focus of the school or sector to suit their leadership’s ideological and pragmatic directions such as the inclusion of the tangible resources that are available.

An important issue in the implementation of curriculum reform, is the availability of time release and access to collegial and collaborative groups to discuss and debate change, impacts the level and type of teacher involvement during reform (Rogers, 2002a). However, Williamson and Gardner (2015) claim that workload and time impact teachers’ ability to be involved in reform discussions, and that there are common “concerns about decision-making that include reference to ‘symbolic’ participation and complaints about no opportunities for teachers to participate” (p. 75). Symbolic participation is interpreted as a negative or tokenistic professional gesture for teachers to feel involved in reform with perfunctory invitations for teachers to participate, but who cannot due to heavy teaching workloads and a lack of time availability to do so. As such, Clarke and Holttum (2013) suggest that symbolic or tokenistic participation is a negative professional barrier and “a disempowering experience” (p. 39). Symbolic participation does not facilitate inclusive processes for teachers

during reform, nor acknowledges teachers. except for, at best, addressing the teachers with disempowering (Clarke & Holttum, 2013), superficial and brief attention. Currie-Knight (2012) suggests that teachers' rich professional skillset should be supported.

Teaching requires current content and assessment knowledge for best practice. Kelly and Cherkowski (2015) suggest that best practice is achieved through meaningful collaborative discussion and professional learning communities. For curriculum knowledge, and in particular for national curriculum understanding, Dadds (2014) suggests that the best approach is through cross-sectoral or combined education sector engagement and resource development to align with a national curriculum. It is the teachers who are then expected to take this collaborative engagement and apply it appropriately to school and student needs. Teachers have authority in their classrooms, where subject content is taught according to the capacity of the teacher and his/her subject content knowledge (Hine, 2015). As a result, the nexus between teacher knowledge and practice is problematic when teachers may feel unable to meet mandated curriculum superordinate requirements, if they perceive themselves to lack required pedagogical content knowledge for their assigned subject. Results from the literature suggest that external mentoring from experienced teachers is useful (Marsh, 1997; Rogers, 2002a).

Professional mentoring and development for teachers has typically been "done to teachers" (Casey, 2013, p. 79), with standard, one-size-fits-all or broad content, rather than meaningfully tailored and individually or discreetly sought. Discreet up-skilling is removed from the internal activity and possible professional judgement of a school site and allows teachers the freedom to choose how to address their teaching content knowledge deficits or concerns (Leshem, 2014). It facilitates wider, innovative perspective from a range of sources, and options for teachers to implement curricula, whilst improving their pedagogical

content knowledge (Marsh, 1997). However, in acknowledging the need for external mentoring or professional learning, there is acknowledgement of possible school-site tension or pressure for teachers to meet expectations of curriculum changes to perform with full knowledge capacity and ability. Stevenson and Gililand (2016) suggest that a lack of subject expertise amongst teachers, further indicates a lack clarity from external superordinate stakeholders, observable through teacher need to access further professional support. Hargreaves (2016) emphasises this, in saying that:

Knowledge needs to circulate if professional capital is going to grow. If schools are isolated from each other, or teachers and their leaders cannot travel out of their country or even out of state for professional learning, this restricts the circulation of insights, ideas and evidence that might lead to improvement. Sometimes the arteries of professional learning atrophy because of neglect. (p. 130)

Here, Hargreaves suggests that professional capital, which influences professional capacity (Fullan, 2016), is valued in effective education systems and, as such, must include and support stakeholders through resources and professional learning to facilitate reform. If Australian teachers are able to meet expectations of teacher standards or benchmarks set via the government-approved Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), then it is judicious to provide appropriate and accessible professional development resources such as supporting texts and professional learning opportunities for teachers to assist with the required understanding of, and use of the *Australian Curriculum* documents. Affeldt (2015) reiterates this need for effective resourcing, noting that whilst a school's local efforts to support teachers through implementation of a national curriculum are valuable, they are "inapposite ... when teachers and districts across the state (and the country, no less) are searching for professional development" (p. 13) to assist with a national mandate. It follows that teachers

need mentors to support the implementation of curriculum reform. The mentors also require support to facilitate their roles, as they too, may not be fully conversant in the introduced reform (He, 2009). This reinforces the need for transparent, accurate, and thorough support from superordinate stakeholders or authority.

Menlo (2015) notes that the use of teachers as valuable resources in roles as mentors is a specialised approach to “planning and initiating change within ... schools [but is] still recognized as a long-term education problem in need of attention” (p. 280). Menlo suggests that teachers as mentors are not currently recognised as effective agents of change during reform in their education communities; they are not recognised by superordinate stakeholders as knowledgeable (Kuntz, Presnall, Priola, Tilford, & Ward, 2013), despite teachers’ immense professional wealth. A collaborative approach such as through mentoring, would be effective if utilised more readily in communities that require additional professional development, but which may not have the resources available to support their teachers (Rogers, 2002a). Accordingly, accessing teacher knowledge gives teachers a sense of agency which empowers their practice individually and as a cohort. Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson (2016) note that “teachers in schools affording strong relational resources achieve higher degrees of agency than their counterparts in schools where such resources are more limited” (p. 143). Further, providing support to teachers to enable meaningful collaboration and further tailored professional learning is suggested in the literature to strengthen the implementation and maintenance of reform whilst providing professional empowerment for teachers and the mitigation of local issues such as specific teacher knowledge deficits (Stevenson & Gililand, 2016).

### 2.1.3 Power coercion and tension

Respectful professional relationships, where teachers are valued for their knowledge and opinion and where research into teacher perspectives of change is important will facilitate conversations that dually support education and change. Tensions in education are exacerbated when decisions of teaching content and practice are prescribed by superordinate stakeholders for teachers, that “[c]ontrary to the official rhetoric of delegating curriculum control to local authorities, schools and individual teachers, teachers have perceived an increase in output control, accretion of duties and loss of professional autonomy and creativity” (Erss et al., 2014, p. 395). This suggests that teachers are not being awarded professional respect or reasonable workloads despite an obvious increase in professional duties to address curriculum reform.

Education mandate indirectly but negatively controls teachers’ increasingly auditable work, where teachers are being ever more impacted through “disenfranchisement and deprofessionalisation [and] their autonomy as curriculum workers is threatened” Parkes (2013, p. 115). However, control of and direction for reform is argued, albeit infrequently in the literature, as useful since it facilitates expedient change (Bush, 2011). While the rigidity of an authoritative, hierarchical approach may be expedient, it stifles teacher creativity and is argued to de-skill and professionally groom or forcibly direct teachers in order to “implement and execute curricula designed by someone else” (Aydarova, 2014, p. 65). Hierarchical leadership administered through demands that are designed to meet accountabilities set by external agencies or governing bodies (Bush, 2011) devalues teacher agency, where “pragmatics of teaching and implementation of national policies rather than those aspects of pedagogy, reflection and critical analysis” (Spendlove, Howes, & Wake, 2010, p. 66) take precedence for frequent political innovation. Enforced change does not encourage professional respect for teacher perspectives and may encourage,

instead, resistance to change (Smith & Lovat, 2003). Change is also dependent on the professional culture of a school (Harris & Jones, 2010), which therefore necessitates the need for professional balance through respectful communication among relevant stakeholders.

Authority and sovereignty of government and educational institutions, particularly in the pragmatic phase of implementation, are highlighted as important in maintaining expedient or progressive educational momentum in schools (Seddon, 2014). Conversely, Robinson (2015) suggests in her study, that decentralisation of curriculum implementation processes impacts teachers by way of privatisation and suggests that reform in a decentralised system creates “very real tensions that exist within these organisations, which are not the seats of power but are sites where ideology and educational values are contested. [The] decentralisation of services results in a loss of professional expertise” (p. 469). Robinson argues that in the pursuit of change, teachers are overlooked. Distanced mandate interferes in established ideologies and teachers’ approaches to practice, since “decentralisation strategies are used to recentralise control [where] autonomy and empowerment of schools has become an empty rhetoric” (Robinson, 2015, p. 469). Distanced mandate suggests that reform is central and control is enforced, causing conflict between stakeholders in the implementation process. Authorities seek expedient reform control, whilst teachers are faced with requiring access to curriculum resources and supports that are likely no longer accessible. Further, teachers are also deprofessionalised in the decentralised reform process through neglected professional dialogue that may challenge superordinate stakeholders (Hargreaves, 2016). However, Arató and Lavicza (2015) suggest that decentralisation can positively allow for “increased local autonomy” (p. 133).

Localised autonomy allows stakeholders to collaborate, investigate and maintain the site appropriately and supportively. While localised autonomy

intimates that a national curriculum may lose focus in a smaller context, local stakeholders are able to troubleshoot local issues for reform. Thomas, Herring, Redmond, and Smaldino (2013) support this approach and suggest that in moving from theory to action, localised stakeholders including teachers are valued as integral in the reform process, where “[r]ather than use the usual incentives or consequences, leaders should consider a creative approach to motivation by providing faculty and staff with more autonomy and more opportunities to demonstrate mastery, along with a sense of greater purpose for their work” (p. 62). Creative, comprehensive, and localised solutions therefore better afford empowering processes, which, in turn, consolidate and prepare stakeholders for reform more effectively. Further, directives such as a national curriculum underlined by teacher standards can then be favourably contextualised, adapted and employed to reduce teacher stress. This approach provides flexibility for teachers who can reflexively modify and progressively attune to curriculum demands.

Over time, teachers become familiar with curriculum content and its requirements, which improves practice for broader curriculum and professional development at times of collaboration, as discussed by Broad and Evans (2006). Broad and Evans (2006) posit that for reform, localisation or “[d]ifferentiation of professional development practices is critical to meeting the unique learning needs of experienced teachers due to their individual developmental and experiential career paths and contexts” (p. 3), suggesting that teachers’ professional experiences do inform and support practice, and are therefore vital to develop appropriately and add to layers of education change. Further, to improve practice, the employment of localised inquiry into teacher needs during policy change enables specialised, empowering and effective support pathways including professional discussion for schools and teachers (Moats, 2014). MacDonald,



Barton, Baguley and Hartwig produced a qualitative interpretive study (2016) of the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts*, which posits that:

If teachers feel as though their voices have not been heard, particularly in the implementation of new curriculum or approaches to teaching and learning, then they are less likely to support the change being suggested. Therefore, if teachers have the capacity to reflect on the reasons why these changes are being made as well as participate more in a becoming process then they will feel greater ownership of the process. (p. 5)

Thus, with greater ownership of processes that influence teaching practice, then greater empowerment is created. This is supported by Avidov-Ungar, Friedman, and Olshtain (2014) who suggest that teachers are empowered best through inclusive and respectful professional processes through:

Increasing a person's ability to perform a task, affording that person power to delegate authority and responsibility, to nurture the ability to take decisions, and to perform tasks through one's own personal will, or in other words 'empowerment with' rather than through 'empowerment on', which is imposing and inconsiderate. (p. 707)

McGrath and Rowan (2012) support this, which encourages the empowering proliferation of teacher perspective or voice, in order to position teachers as critical stakeholders in education, as "active" (p. 71) "producers" (p. 71) of knowledge who best inform education reform processes.

The empowerment of teachers through inclusive processes is seen as a method for school and teacher success (Farris-Berg, 2014). Interestingly although perhaps paradoxically, the AITSL professional teacher standards connected to the delivery of the *Australian Curriculum*, hint at teacher autonomy through reflexive practice via a stipulated review of program delivery and method and assistance of colleagues – listed only in the highly accomplished or lead teacher categories. This suggests two things; first and positively, that only experienced teachers have

the ability to review and improve practice, and secondly but lamentably, that less experienced teachers follow superordinate instruction without professional power or insight for transformative professional behaviour among their teaching colleagues. This is important to note since Weaven and Clark (2015) suggest that this indicates that issues of power do exist in Australian education when teachers are not recognised as capable of influencing their colleagues or other stakeholders. They note that there is a decision-making tension through the “frustrating lack of opportunity to contribute to decisions about what they will teach in their own classrooms – let alone determine them for themselves” (Weaven & Clark, p. 167) when superordinate stakeholders expect mandate to be followed without negotiation between the teachers and themselves. Further, in light of Hargreaves’ (2016) discussion of accountability for teachers, this exclusive professional capacity can be viewed as a heightened issue of power and control during curriculum reform, leaving less experienced teachers “vulnerable to three major problems: the problem of mistrust, the problem of hierarchy, the problem of privacy” (p. 126), where it is teacher practice being reviewed with the added pressure to perform during the reform despite possible curriculum confusion and resource inadequacy.

Teacher autonomy may not exist in a decentralised education structure (Erss et al., 2014), as it results in a local superordinate stakeholder control. This causes a disempowering, devalued level of teacher agency since directives and performance remain controlled by the state government authorities. This deprofessionalisation is restrictive and ineffective for teachers’ collegial morale (Rogers, 2002a). Conversely, Weaven and Clark (2015) suggest that in some cases, it is the direct control through a mandated curriculum that has heightened teachers’ awareness of their pedagogical practise and sense of autonomy. This is a dichotomous view but one that can be found in teachers who require more direction or mentoring to strengthen their teaching roles and capacities.

Decentralised education gives authority to localised superordinates, and so local power struggles and relationships may impact teacher work (Robinson, 2015). Where teacher employment is held through temporary or probationary contracts rather than with permanent career certainty, teachers are reluctant to contest decisions made at the local level (Lu, Jiang, Yu, & Li, 2015; Somech, 2010). Though frustrated by decisions that impact their roles, teachers with vulnerable tenure and conditions, including showing commitment to an organisation to retain their employment, are more likely to accept the changes and directions given by their superordinate leaders (Jo, 2014). This is problematic for teachers who find issues in their practice, but feel that they cannot highlight these or contend with their superordinates, leaving particular issues unresolved and teachers stressed and confused (Weaven & Clark, 2015). Educational mandate is therefore often left uncontested to retain employment. This causes teachers to alter their pedagogical approaches to their teaching in order to adopt mandated change and to appease superordinate stakeholders.

Adapting to change is a reflexive yet conformist approach to mandate or change which “pervade[s] the values and beliefs that are fundamental to the goals of the organisations themselves” (Robinson, 2015, p. 480). Adapting, rather than adopting, means manipulation of resources such as the curriculum, to suit individual or contextual needs. Adoption is the full embrace of reform, with innovative change to meet requirements. It is suggested that adaptability is vital to enable adoption of change which relies on the “interdependencies of contextual (environmental) factors in the adoption of innovation” (Buchan, 2014, p. 100). This research argues that the adaptability of stakeholders is reliant on the available resources to them. Interestingly, this is a managerial aspect of the *Australian Curriculum: English* reform that was left to the states and jurisdictions by ACARA (Australian Government, 2014b), making resource availability a localised issue and therefore an important one to explore.

Education is constantly evolving and requires leadership to direct official change. Constant change in education places teachers onto a systemic continuum of control in order to implement or direct change through superordinate stakeholders (Di Martino, 2014). A systemic continuum of control sees that in cases of major reform, control is held remotely by the authoritative superordinate stakeholders, whereas tasks perceived as lower risk are delegated and or implemented by stakeholders regarded as holding less authority or power (Frederickson & Frederickson, 2006), where teachers “implement the decisions of others” (Williamson & Gardner, 2015, p. 76). This is therefore a challenging and disempowering signal of respect for teachers who wield little power in the eyes of superordinate stakeholders. Institutions then hold the power to shape and steer reform, driving “individual choices in certain directions and thus both restricts and makes action [reform] possible” (Andersen, 2007, p. 42) for superordinate stakeholders. Thus, in education, teachers are responsible for what are considered low risk tasks at classroom level, since the authority for teachers to control or design the requirements of curriculum is removed in current reform approaches, despite being designed “to operate on the basis of professional educational expertise”(Australian Government, 2014b, p. 83). This demonstrates how teachers are positioned as subordinates; the stakeholders who perform the action of curriculum reform, but who are exposed to the fluctuations of policy or education change, despite being an “insufficient condition for effective networks” (Mulford, 2008, p. 33), to expedite education reform. It can be said then, that this is a disempowering positioning of teachers who should possess the power to be involved in the reforms that directly impact their practice.

The literature suggests that there is need for greater connection between theory and practice to provide transparency and assurance in quality teacher engagement with and knowledge of reform (Darling-Hammond, 2006a; Oates, 2010). Higher reform connectivity for teachers through transparency and

inclusivity allows for increased teacher agency and self-efficacy, and thus reflects equity and regard for teaching work, professional capital, and education reform (Darling-Hammond, 2006b). A recent study of a large cohort of 1,878 teachers, linked teacher attrition and teacher agency to the extent of transparency for, and inclusivity of teachers, and found that:

Allowing teachers to co-decide how work is organized can induce job satisfaction and fosters feelings of collegiality and a sense of community. Participation in decision-making is crucial to mitigate the impact of intensification by enabling teachers to identify problematic external pressures and tackl[e] them collectively” (Van Droogenbroeck, Spruyt, & Vanroelen, 2014, p. 100)

The findings and discussion of the Van Droogenbroeck et al. (2014) study note that for teachers to work with defined accountabilities for change, they require effective communication, inclusivity and respect from superordinate stakeholders for teacher workload and autonomy or agency rather than being underprepared (Southerland, 2013), which is argued in this research, as integral to adapting to reform. For effective collegial practices and educator empowerment to prevail, particularly during systemic change, issues of transparency and inclusivity must therefore be addressed.

#### **2.1.4 Transparency and Reciprocal Accountability**

The “application of a rigorous and transparent ... process by a provider is crucial to the acceptance of the market” (Gillett, 2011, pp. 202-203). Transparent processes for teachers are integral to the successful functioning and management of educational change (Hayes, 2014). Communication is what facilitates and creates different perspectives of transparency (Humada-Ludeke, 2013). This research argues that teachers need effective communication and transparency to

feel assured of the expectations that they need to facilitate the knowledge required for practice. Teachers also need inclusivity and acknowledgement of their professional capacity. Weigel and Jones (2015) argue that superordinate stakeholders or school leadership find the demands of mandate difficult to manage in regards to finding time for instructional leadership and collegial interaction to facilitate mandate. While Cooper and colleagues (2016) suggest that “school structures that promote and support effective teacher leadership include time for collaboration, shared leadership, and embedded professional development” (p. 88), in practice, this is problematic and dependent on structures such as funding to include time release as part of the teacher workload (Williamson & Gardner, 2015).

This research argues that regular and open dialogue is more effective in schools where internal or site-specific collegial relationships are more transparent, inclusive and productive. Group dynamics in schools are impacted by collegial relationships, where teaching cohorts rely on internal behaviour and inclusivity in which “group cohesion influences members’ behaviours in important ways: high levels of group cohesion have been associated with greater commitment to group goals, participation, communication, and self-confidence” (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010, p. 361). Greenlee and Karanxha (2010) suggest that an inclusive approach for teachers supports and strengthens knowledge and participation, resulting in a burgeoning knowledge-bank and increased confidence. Professional relationships and cohesion affect the frequency and type of collegial collaboration for teachers. Bridwell-Mitchell and Cooc (2016) found, in their two year study examining social capital, that organisations such as schools must be aware of cohesiveness in their workplace. They concluded that whilst strong cohesiveness is key to facilitating formal processes such as mandated reform, it recognised the importance of providing “mutually reinforcing relationships among the colleagues” (p. 16). This means that teachers of all rank and experience must be

afforded equal opportunity to add to education reform or discussion. This indicates the high importance of transparency and inclusivity for teachers during reform (Rowan & Bigum, 2012).

Professional modelling or leadership through effective communication via senior staff encourages, creates and sustains a positive and collegially supportive culture (Rogers 2002). In order for change to occur, collegial communication should therefore be inclusive of all teachers. Williamson and Gardner (2015) emphasise this, saying that “when principals foster openness and social trust with teachers as colleagues, teacher capacity to implement change and act proactively is strengthened” (p. 74). This is challenged by Hargreaves (2016), who suggests that such relationships can be difficult. A top-down culture can impede transparency and teacher trust of colleagues and leadership.

An open culture of transparency is integral to creating positive school culture of reform, where inclusive and “focused conversations and inquiries ... lead to improvements” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 163). This is a sustainable approach if it is supported by superordinate stakeholders. Gökmenoglu and Clark (2015) suggest that it is from such transparency and communication that teachers gain a sense of professional value or teacher agency and a level of certainty that their feedback and opinions regarding larger issues found in reform are considered and conveyed by their school leadership to external superordinate stakeholders. This is problematic however, since if collegial relationships are not conducive to a transparent culture, then uncertainty, stress, tension, and lowered teacher and professional identity prevails. However, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) note that while smaller or isolated sites can provide autonomy, “it also cuts teachers off from the valuable feedback that would help those judgements be wise and effective” (2012, p. 106). In this, whilst autonomy is viewed as crucial to teacher growth, greater involvement, including through transparent direction, allows professional growth and confidence in practice. Rogers (2002a) supports

transparent, effective communication between stakeholders as crucial in all circumstances, that a progressive collegial culture must be encouraged and supported to build professional trust. Rogers (2002a) states that:

[t]eachers need to feel that they can engage in professional discussions both informally and more formally with high trust. In this way their ongoing learning is occasioned from supportive feedback and sharing ... teaching and management practice can always be improved by shared professional reflection. (p. 44)

From this, through equitable communication a culture of trust is built. An environment of trust establishes professional freedom for teachers, that encourages purposeful professional learning, sharing and development. Consequently, this culture empowers stakeholders as it encourages and improves capacity for developing understanding to effectively implement reform (Timperley, 2011) with mutual influence (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Van Aalst and Chan (2012) views transparent, shared “knowledge-building” [... as] future-proofing” (p. 85) for the benefit of education stakeholders. In contrast, without transparency or effective communication, perceptions of professional distrust may emerge.

The effect of a lack of communication for teachers, is teacher disengagement or increased resistance to processes such as reform (Björk & Blase, 2009), making the task of implementation problematic for compliant teachers who are willing to conform and address reform changes. However, a lack of communication causes a sense of professional disregard or devaluing of teacher agency and distances teachers from the reform process. Timperley (2011) says that “teachers cannot readily engage in cycles of inquiry and knowledge-building when they feel criticized or put down for not being good enough” (p. 41), when they feel disregarded and excluded from practice. Thus, if communication or transparency is limited and inflexible, then a culture of disconnect and resistance will persist, which is a barrier to engaging in effective



change processes (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2013). The professional culture within a school is entrenched and inevitably self-replicating, particularly if effective measures such as transparent communication are not taken (Mangez, 2010). Transparency facilitates an inclusive culture, which McMaster states is an “element makes up a vital part of school members’ efforts to create sustainable inclusive change” (McMaster, 2014, p. 44). Without transparency, reform may become exclusive or difficult with resistance from teachers and older or stagnating approaches to curriculum in education. While authorities such as AITSL set teacher standards, transparency is essential between stakeholders for meeting these teaching standards, accountabilities and processes.

This research argues that transparency among stakeholders for effective process must be established through a reciprocal relationship. A reciprocal relationship supports understanding of context and capability or facilitative capacity of, between, and by stakeholders. Successful reform involves the support of “a shared vision, increasing the academic press for learning, emphasizing teacher professional development, facilitating a collaborative working culture, and involving stakeholders in decision making” (Heck & Hallinger, 2010, pp. 229-230). A reciprocal approach to accountability sees that each level of stakeholders within a system such as education “should be held accountable for the contributions it must make to produce an effective system. A comprehensive system must attend to the inputs, processes, and outcomes that produce student learning” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014, p. 6). King (2014) and Opfer and Pedder (2011) suggest that mandates such as curriculum reform should be comprehensively and systemically supported by superordinate stakeholders for teachers through access to relevant resources in order to facilitate the implementation of an overhauled curriculum. Through this, teachers are therefore supported in meeting their accountabilities including addressing the AITSL standards of teaching. This is where “intelligently allocated resources and

professional expertise” (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014) are essential to sustaining professional growth of teachers and understanding of and alignment for reform. Intelligent allocation of assistance refers to differentiated and appropriately utilised, meaningful professional learning including through professional mentoring (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014). Experience is essential for quality teaching (Pylman, 2016), so it follows that teaching experience through professional support such as mentoring, is advantageous. Teachers are instrumental in the implementation of education reform so must be supported through effective resources including mentoring, via their superordinate counterparts (Gökmenoglu & Clark, 2015).

Reciprocal accountability allows for professional inclusivity or positive perspectives of teacher agency by encouraging teachers to access or request focused professional learning or assistance for their practice and pedagogical content knowledge, fostering “a cultural value of teachers; integrating formative and summative accountability; organizing peer collaboration that develops the work of teachers and the learning of students” (Jamal, Tilchin, & Essaw, 2015, p. 59), through stakeholder interaction. This approach also encourages professional capacity and strengthens superordinate trust in teacher agency through extended or continued professional development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014) for teacher currency. Accordingly, it is through the transparency of reciprocal accountability that local or contextualised measures are developed for meaningful and tangible facilitation.

Contextualised discussion and strategies for addressing curriculum implementation for teachers, further allow consideration of relevant and differentiated resourcing for teacher subject knowledge and professional development. Through inclusion of teacher feedback, contextualising and differentiating professional learning enables equitable and relevant access to curriculum resources. This literature review supports that, in allowing for

localised reciprocity of stakeholder inclusivity and resourcing, including teacher mentoring, teaching cohorts are capable of feeding relevant professional knowledge back into their communities and establish a comprehensive mentoring framework (Crow, 2015). This enables intelligent and prudent resource management (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014) to effect broader and inclusive access to professional learning. Hopkins, Rulli, Schiff, and Fradera (2015) suggest that teacher mentoring encourages a meaningful, transformative and “professionally empowering tool for teacher self-efficacy and school capacity building” (p. 2) for a dynamic professional culture at the local level, serving as an essential reciprocal and inclusive approach, which alleviates uncertainty about and resistance to educational change, for teachers.

#### **2.1.5 Teacher agency through professional capital**

Numerous global studies recommend that autonomy of practice for teachers is vital for professional growth, enjoyment and collegiality, which are beneficial to teacher development and for the application and adaption of reform (Lee & Nie, 2014; Schneider & Kipp, 2015; Vanassche & Kelchtermans, 2014). Autonomy or teacher agency permits teachers the freedom to grow professionally with diverse approaches to teaching, allowing them to develop experience and flexibility, further enabling development of professional resilience. The literature supports the view that resilience is a reflexive characteristic for teachers, which facilitates adaption of teacher practice as needed, particularly during education change. A teacher’s creativity or autonomy within their role is empowered through the development and support of valuable and flexible teaching experience (Lefstein & Perath, 2014; Weaven & Clark, 2015), where “teachers are among those most responsible for carrying out the policies adopted, their sense of

ownership of policy is crucial to its effective implementation” (Lefstein & Perath, 2014, p. 34).

The literature suggests that a crucial aspect of professional development is the “nurturing and sustaining of a professional culture of continuous improvement, collective responsibility and shared leadership in and across schools” (Fullan, Rincón-Gallardo, & Hargreaves, 2015, p. 7) and wider stakeholders including literacy, linguistic, history, and other experts. A supported and shared wealth of professional knowledge encourages an inclusive culture that fosters continuous improvement, collective responsibility and high expectations for students and educators for long-term benefit (Killion, 2012). Focusing on a professional learning culture is what engages and provides interest in reform or openness to change and facilitates the growth of professional capital.

Professional capital is described by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) as the culmination of interrelated professional aspects that influence teacher practice and which also help to define it. Professionalism refers to how an individual composes self and carries out his or her work; it is also how an individual is viewed by colleagues in light of their work competency, which impacts on the individual’s perspective of self and of the work done by self. Being a professional includes being able to carry out tasks to a certain standard required, meeting set expectations and own satisfaction, relating to self-efficacy, and ability, to cope with those expectations. Professional capital involves the practise, perspective and wealth of knowledge through professional experience that a person collects over time, requiring “attention not only to political and societal investments in education but also to leadership actions and educator needs, contributions, and career stages” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013, p. 36). Professional capital is consequently essential and most valued during education or curriculum reform, where the success and longevity of implementation are dependent on the amount of investment or support for growth. Professional

capital involves a combination of three key components: human capital – the personal skills, social capital – interpersonal skills, and decisional capital – the ability to make suitable judgements based on knowledge and experience (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Professional capital is the dynamic interrelationship of these components which influence teacher capacity and a teacher's sense of agency.

According to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), human capital is the development and application of the useful knowledge and skills that people possess in an organisation. It is the basis of knowledge that can be developed and shared in a community to expand upon and grow relevant to the site or organisation's needs (Rowan, 2012b), particularly through sustained or shared professional development (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, 2013).

Social capital (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012) is a measure of the strength of the relationships that people hold internally and externally to an organisation, such as a school, so as to access the existent human capital of teachers and to collaborate meaningfully whilst acknowledging teacher agency. When social capital or relationships are nurtured effectively by superordinate stakeholders, greater institutional, personal and teacher collective efficacy occurs. Teacher collective efficacy is an aspect of teacher perspectives of self-efficacy, referring to a person's own "judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes" (Tschannen-Moran & Wolfolk-Hoy, 2001, p. 783) in their role or performance as teacher (Darling-Hammond, 2003), as a school or cohort. This is a transformational and empowering tool for organisations looking to add value to their cohort during education change. Additionally, social capital adds to positive perspectives and professional satisfaction of the working environment (Hoff Minckler, 2015). However, Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, and Hogan (2008) suggest that social capital increases susceptibility to negative perspectives of an environment or event, if strained or poor organisational politics prevail. The literature suggests

that internal collegiality thus influences the culture or social capital of a school, indicating the importance of supporting positive, collaborative education environments through effective communication and acknowledgement of teacher capital. Teacher capital is the professional capital that teachers independently bring to and inform their practice, and which supports teacher agency. Networks or social capital relationships that form teacher capital, are particularly important for smaller schools or jurisdictions where resources may be reduced or where there is a need for wider professional knowledge and experience to assist with implementation or strategies. This assists such cohorts to effectively and suitably adapt teacher skills to address the local context (Loera et al., 2013), through the use of decisional capital.

Decisional capital for teachers, is described by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) as the capacity through teacher agency, for teachers to make informed choices for their practice. This suggests that through decisional capital, local needs are addressed autonomously whilst also considering for example, application of larger scale or national mandate. Decisional capital is an aspect of professional capital, which is described as “the wealth or poverty of the collective knowledge or expertise in a profession” (Hargreaves, 2016, p. 130). Decisional capital helps a teaching cohort make sense of systemic demand such as reform. However, Hargreaves (2016) warns that this decisional capital can be disruptive to superordinate stakeholders who may view knowledge as a negative influence on reform, when decisional capital or teacher input has “not been sanctioned by the system” (p. 130). Decisional capital is an aspect of professional capital which reflects how capabilities are developed over time via experience, with particular focus on teacher capacity to make professional judgements (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013). It is the teacher’s “capacity to choose well and make good decisions. It is best thought of as expertise that grows over time” (Fullan, 2016, p. 47). This suggests that for teacher content knowledge to develop, teachers require

consistent and accessible professional learning opportunities to work with reform requirements. The literature suggests that making relevant professional judgements is developed further by collaborative efforts to discuss issues between colleagues for authentic solutions and learning (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2007). This is problematic if teachers are not supported or enabled to deal with change autonomously or as a cohort, relinquishing power and control of change to superordinate stakeholders. This highlights the necessity for collegial work to facilitate knowledge and experience through sustained professional learning. In doing so, intelligent use is made of resources and expedient solutions are found by teachers who simultaneously add to their holistic professional capital under shared or immediate circumstances at each career stage, “folding new information into prior knowledge” (Roseler & Dentzau, 2013, p. 620) through the scaffolding of their professional knowledge and strategies. Professional capital “develops educator capacity” (Fullan, 2016, p. 44), which shapes teacher agency.

Teacher agency is an active or dynamic understanding of autonomy in and capacity for teacher practice, by teachers, as the result of long-term investment in professional capital. Teacher agency acknowledges teachers as “complete professionals. They are true pros who are well prepared, sufficiently paid, properly supported, continuously responsible, and shrewd in judgments after years of inquiry and practice” (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 185). Teacher agency is dependent on the professional capital developed by the teachers and the environment of their organisation. Zoltners-Sherer (2008) suggests that all teachers have the power or teacher agency to enact teaching routine or practice, and choose:

to carry out the aspects of the routine in the ways in which they see fit, based on their own goals, expertise, capacity, as well as their perception of the organization’s goals. Additionally, people carry out routines based

on the interactions they have with other people in the organization, the tools that they use, and the context in which their practice lives. (p. 4)

The literature suggests that supportive contexts empower teachers, but that this can be problematised by discourses of the political environment or workplaces, including an often-found lack of superordinate direction and appropriate school culture to facilitate change (Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015; Horn & Little, 2010; Priestley et al., 2016). An unsupportive school culture leaves teachers to navigate their roles, including during educational change, without certain direction, resulting in confusion and resistance to change.

Teacher agency is entrenched in professional learning communities which must be relevant to teacher needs (Riveros, Newton, & Burgess, 2012), rather than to superfluous politicised or “business-capital interests” (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2012, para. 17). Teacher agency is an aspect of the teacher as an individual during reform who, with rightfully valued professional capital, should be viewed as professionally capable of localised decision-making and as a valued contributor to the larger decision-making processes. Feldman and Pentland (2003) suggest that teacher agency is specific to the context in which it is exercised, therefore positioning the teacher as knowledgeable and as an authority with respect to local needs. Here, teacher agency becomes the voice or mediating factor that either complies or shows resistance to large-scale reform. It follows that where agency is decentralised and authority is given to local stakeholders during reform, such as in the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum*, it is the teacher who should be acknowledged locally and nationally, and be permitted reasonable or sufficient professional autonomy in their practice. Professional autonomy extends to resource selection or intelligent resourcing (Darling-Hammond et al., 2014) for professional learning. This includes professional development in understanding personalised professional needs, access to collegial



mediation, and teachers' differentiated choices in classrooms for specific learning needs where the teacher, rather than the superordinate authority, knows best (Frostenson, 2015) for their own practice. Therefore, where decentralisation occurs, it is important to examine teacher agency in smaller or localised contexts.

The literature suggests that agency for professional flexibility is important to meet mandate requirements, as “decentralisation of decision-making power need not automatically imply decreased autonomy at the level of practice, since collective forms of work, preferred by school management, may require it” (Frostenson, 2015, p. 24). Paradoxically, while teachers believe that they must be in full control to achieve teaching autonomy, the need for open collegial collaboration or access to social capital in collegial pedagogical content knowledge and teaching experience to facilitate reform, such as that of a new curriculum, means that the teachers who collaborate, often join together from different schools, sectors, and professional cultures, with differing perspectives and motives for their use of the curriculum. This results in disparate conclusions and approaches to new curriculum (Australian Government, 2014b), which implies the need for superordinate instruction or mediation. This is supported by the Melbourne Declaration (Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs, 2008), which highlights that organised implementation of reform, or “action plans” (p. 18), including collaboration between school sectors, will be facilitated by Australian government bodies. This implies the need for transparent superordinate management of collaboration between teachers. Simoncini, Lasen, and Rocco (2014) make note of the direction by superordinate body AITSL, to promote collaborative efforts for teachers to build upon and learn from their colleagues, which would encourage greater professional growth.

The literature suggests that teacher capital and knowledge vary, with teacher collaboration able to increase and improve professional knowledge for praxis

(Hutchison, 2012). However, the literature also suggests that there exists the need for greater clarity through the resources from the issuing governing curriculum body (Australian Government, 2014b), such as ACARA, to assist teachers in their collaborative work. This assertion is supported by an American study by Ketterlin-Geller, Baumer, and Lichon (2015), which found that collaboration between teachers and education sectors benefits teachers and students, but must be supported by administrators or superordinate stakeholders to organise, “implement and sustain an environment that is conducive to collaboration. Administrators need to actively build a school culture that values and nurtures collaboration” (p. 57). The study also concluded that professional capital or teacher agency is supported by way of “proactively restructur[ing] existing time and resources to intentionally facilitate teamwork” (p. 57). Ketterlin-Geller and colleagues’ findings suggest that professional support for teachers will reduce performance burden on teachers, particularly during reform, whilst investing in, acknowledging, and utilising teacher professional capital. The literature suggests that teacher agency is compromised where unsupported teacher practice (Balkar, 2015) concomitantly does not support effective education reform (Fullan, 2011). Hardy (2016) suggests in his case study of professional learning for teachers, that in order to dissolve the tensions of mandate compliance, focused professional support, such as subject planning and assessment preparation under educational reform, for particular contexts, must be identified to enable effective reform processes. Hardy suggests that focused professional support for teachers must be facilitated with attention to “specificity of support for teachers’ learning as professional practice – the “doings,” “sayings,” and “relatings” in the context of current educational conditions – is an area for further inquiry.” (Hardy, 2016, p. 6). The literature suggests that through focused support, that teachers will also be empowered to continue to work effectively with change whilst improving their subject content knowledge.

### **2.1.6 Structural support and efficacy**

The literature elucidates that central to reform, are teachers' voice, self-efficacy, teacher agency, leadership, and collaboration (Frost, 2011). These are facilitated by the structural supports of the organisations in which teachers are employed. Structural efficacy is the suitability and availability of resources and instruction available to assist teachers in carrying out their work (Darling-Hammond, La Pointe, Meyerson, Orr, & Cohen, 2007). This is problematic where superordinate stakeholders do not provide sufficient supports for teachers and teachers' trust in educational reform processes are diminished, as found by MacLean, Mulholland, Gray, and Horrell (2015). Their study suggests that the direction of curriculum mandate is lost when teachers are not supported and teachers are left "stumbling around in the dark" (p. 10) to adapt without informative guidance or resources from superordinate stakeholders, particularly by those asking for the changes.

The context and culture of the professional environment greatly influence levels of self-efficacy and teacher agency (Leithwood, 2006). Roseler and Dentzau (2013) suggest that there is little evidence to support the use of localised or differentiated professional learning. However, Darling-Hammond and colleagues assert otherwise in their findings, where "policies that provide schools and teachers with the power to make decisions around local curriculum and assessment practices, and to select the content of professional development based on local priorities, are also associated with higher levels of teacher engagement in collaborative work and learning activities" (Darling-Hammond, Chung Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009, p. 28). From this position, a professional environment is most supportive of teachers where teachers themselves are involved in the decision-making process. Therefore, inclusion of teachers in decision-making processes gives professional power to the teachers in their ability to voice opinion and construct suitable adaptations of mandated reform

individually and amongst colleagues (Garsed, 2013). The literature argues that a lack of teacher input is seen as demoralising (Bangs & Frost, 2016), which could be due to an imposing or restrictive administrative culture of a school. The administrative culture of a school is therefore set by the leadership, entrenched through routine and the flexibility of it.

The literature suggests that through distribution of leadership roles, teachers are enabled to organise and manage the implementation of reform locally and appropriately, to “make locally appropriate, strategic decisions” (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012, p. 36), through a variety of approaches dependent on the individuals and their needs in those roles. This remains however, a problematic, hierarchical approach, and one in which teachers remain disadvantaged in the possible case of collegial discord. Selmer, Jonasson, and Lauring (2013) suggest in their study, that collegial discord is highly influential upon teacher satisfaction and functional relationships where “the quality of social relationships within educational organisations strongly influences how well they function” (p. 96). Thus, allowance for collaborative approaches with greater teacher independence may be more likely to produce meaningful outcomes and more effective, sustained reform. The collective perspectives, aims, and practices for successful reform are dependent on the cohesion between colleagues in regard to professional relationships, innovation or transformation, and teachers’ collegial pedagogical congruence, or, curriculum alignment (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015). AITSL (2014c) endorses collaborative practice and suggests that it includes evidence of: professional conversation for pedagogy and practice and modification of programs, collegial research for effective teaching strategies and programs, observation and feedback, goal setting, undertaking leadership roles, and that collaboration is prioritised as a professional investment. These aspects of collaborative practice are dependent on the school culture, and resource availability and direction (Dillon, Erkens, Sanna, & Savastano, 2015).

For reform to succeed with the support of professional learning, it has been recommended by Dillon et al. (2015) that stakeholders receive ongoing support, differentiated professional learning, collaboration of subject knowledge and resources, and have access to subject experts. These aspects suggest that teachers require relevant and maintained professional learning to support them through education reform. They also position teachers as the causal, valued instrument in education reform for students where student academic outcomes appear to matter most (Rothman, 2016). In the Australian context, continued, differentiated and supported professional learning is valued and listed as vital by superordinate stakeholders such as AITSL, for teacher professional growth, understanding, and practical functionality of education change, such as curriculum reform (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2015). Fullan (2006) explains that to facilitate sustainable reform, a progressive, transformative, and supportive culture within schools needs to be built. Education culture therefore needs to be receptive to change by way of constant contextualised review in a professionally reciprocal and empowering environment. This is said to be done through receptiveness to change governed by small contextual changes through “lateral capacity building; vertical relationships; deep learning; dual commitment [trust] to short-term and long-term results; cyclical energizing [through] the long lever of leadership” (Fullan, 2006, p. 115).

Receptiveness to change is facilitated by tapping into teacher knowledge and through the supporting of reciprocal collegial relationships across stakeholder capacities to enrich teacher knowledge and practice. The literature suggests that scaffolding professional teacher education helps to “foster an appropriate combination of contextual conversation, pedagogy, population, and setting.” (Battersby & Verdi, 2015, p. 25). A supportive and scaffolded approach to teacher education, or, professional learning, provides teacher understanding of

changes and requirements to strengthen and develop teacher practice through constant problem-solving and renewal of education approaches with the support of school, sector and government stakeholders to reassure teachers for and during reform (Crosswell, 2006) as part of a professional learning community. A receptive and supportive education culture for teachers, is a positive, intelligent and holistic view of structural local sovereignty or control of change, where adaption is tailored to specific need to ensure teaching transformation, and empowerment. Therefore, if stakeholders acknowledge these professional aspects and work towards facilitating them, sustainable and internal growth through suitable and “self- [re-] organizing patterns” (Fullan, 2006, p. 117) such as awareness of individual teacher needs, will emerge.

If mandate is imposed, then it follows that the preparedness of structural efficacy to meet mandate demands via superordinate stakeholders, requires resources to support relevant implementation processes such as those listed above, include professional learning, time release, and collaborative efforts or meeting time, for teachers (Larsen & Hunter, 2014). Previous international and Tasmanian research investigating education reform such as Garsed (2013); Park and Sung (2013); (Rodwell, 2009); Rothman (2016); and Watt (2005), note that teachers are often professionally disregarded or pressured due to lack of support, to implement mandate. An important Tasmanian study (Garsed, 2013) of a previous Tasmanian curriculum reform, the *Essential Learnings* (Tasmanian Department of Education, 2009), showed that there is a lack of willingness by teachers to conform with mandate when there is insufficient time, as a resource, to consolidate new requirements. This is an issue where teachers are frustrated in trying to balance and re-interpret new aspects to fit with their prior knowledge and school context. Conforming to reform demand is described in the literature as requiring selflessness and capitulation of teacher identity, whereby regulation or system demands for teachers forced to comply, impacts teacher autonomy and

identity (Mockler, 2013; Parkes, 2013; Sachs & Mockler, 2012). Park and Sung (2013) also evidence the difficulties of conforming to reform demands in their research findings about teacher perspectives of curriculum reform, which showed teachers feeling unsupported and excluded from reform change and pressured into meeting demands despite the sudden increase in their workload, with pressure to conform to internal superordinate demands under an “intimate knowledge from the local context” (p. 30), causing teacher attrition. These broader findings suggest that communication channels during education reform, that could otherwise assist in facilitating or initiating support for teachers, are not currently transparent or inclusive of subordinate stakeholders.

Lack of support is noted in the literature to include issues of time allowance, professional rapport through collegiality, resources, and collaboration (Barth, 2006; Day, Stobart, Sammons, & Kington, 2006; Selmer et al., 2013). The literature suggests that without these supports, teachers are left feeling fatigued and frustrated with their roles and reform, causing teacher attrition. Remediation or reducing the impact of teacher attrition, is noted by Ebersöhn (2013) as requiring “Relationship-resourced Resilience” (p. 97) – a collective resilience or collegial collaboration, to facilitate professional adaptation in demanding circumstances such as education reform.

Teacher attrition stems from a variety of factors including “lack of personal [professional] support, insufficient financial support, pressures from the reform movement, lack of community support, poor image of the profession, [and] role ambiguity” (Gold & Roth, 2013, p. 5). These factors form part of a myriad of aspects that impact teacher perspectives of reform, contextualised and influenced by teacher workload, superordinate supports, and mandate expectation. Williamson and Myhill (2008) discuss these aspects as teachers try to meet mandate or external pressures in conjunction with pre-existing demands on their time, which impact teacher stress, teaching quality and education outcomes for

students, and which also add to teacher resistance to change. This means that during the added pressure of reform, teachers need to be professionally accommodated and not weighed down by unnecessary workload in order to cope with change for holistic, adaptive and sustainable approaches to mitigate attrition and to improve teacher attitudes toward reform.

## **2.2 Models of reform**

Successful reform in the education context requires order and explicit and transparent communication. Models of reform have been classified as either high-control or low-control models (Edwards, 2005; Marsh, 2009). High-control models of educational reform are more commonly observed where teachers are influenced and controlled by administrators such as education sector authorities or school leaders, who overtly direct process and productivity or practical implementation of change (Edwards, 2005). Conversely, a low-control model of educational reform orders directives through shared or transparent administration amongst stakeholders, possesses little influence or control amongst stakeholders, but allows for a sense of equity to “reduce the asymmetry of one group’s influence over another” (Marsh & Huberman, 1984, p. 54) where stakeholders have inclusive processes. In research during the 1960s, the term diffusion which can be classified as a low-control model, is used to describe lack of solid or trustworthy process in the flow of information within organisations, suggesting that information, instruction, or detail, is eventually received by stakeholders haphazardly, which may be recognised by stakeholders as inadequate (Rogers, 2003). Moreover, as part of the diffusion process, the intended message communicated is at risk in that information may be lost or excluded, which consequently affects all stakeholders.



Diffusion is defined as “the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system” (Rogers, 2003, p. 37). This means that diffusion is the gradual passing, provision, or filtration of information that is perceived as valuable by superordinate to subordinate stakeholders. Diffusion can be viewed then as a disorderly, selective process of relaying information depending on stakeholder relationships, as time consuming, unreliable and problematic, depending on the perspective or policies of the institution in which it is found. In education settings, the diffusion model incorporates four major components including the presentation of an innovation, the types and modes of communication, time to understand and implement the innovation, and the social or education system that it occurs in (Rogers, 2003). These major components are explored in the research participants’ data.

The diffusion model (Rogers, 2003) recognises innovation as the perception of an entity such as knowledge, design, invention or method being a new or positive alternative. However, innovation is relative, since the originality of an idea is determined by an individual depending on their knowledge (Rogers, 2003). The uptake of innovation, resulting in change, depends on how it is perceived by the social environment it is situated in. According to Rogers (2003), a perception of an innovation depends on five attributes. These attributes include: relative advantage – the benefit to an organisation such as an education system; compatibility – the functional or practical tenet of an innovation such as a new curriculum; complexity – academic rigour or suitability for education; trialability – if the innovation can be assessed for efficacy or application and implementation in schools; and observability – how an innovation can be observed in action or daily education and teaching practice (Rogers, 2003). These attributes can be explored through teachers’ practice to provide review of innovation such as the *Australian Curriculum* reform.

Effective communication in the diffusion process is dependent on the ease of communication between stakeholders in a particular community such as education sectors and the schools within them, where “the operations and vitality of a system depends on capable and harmonious relationships” (Gonzales, 2014, p. 120). The relationships between stakeholders affect the detail and efficiency of communicated information (Rogers, 2003). The literature suggests that indirect and unsupported or discontinuous processes for information dissemination are unreliable, since upper level stakeholders may not pass on information to lower level stakeholders, or do so inaccurately (Australian Government, 2014b; Hargreaves, 2016).

The transfer or dissemination of information is an hierarchical or vertical process (Visser, 2016). Louis and van Velzen (1988) define dissemination as a process that “consists of purposive, goal-oriented communication of information or knowledge that is specific and potentially useable, from one social system to another” (p. 262). Information that is “potentially useable” (Louis & van Velzen, 1988) suggests that the dissemination process as a whole may not be effective or accurate, where specific information for particular needs, is not available, or as Nisbet and Scheufele (2009) suggest, that a stakeholder may “translate their preferred interpretation” (p. 1771), and that the “information can translate into very different [...] conclusions” (p. 1774). Hutchinson and Huberman (1993) suggest that dissemination is “the transfer of knowledge with and across settings, with the expectation that the knowledge will be ‘used’ conceptually or instrumentally” (p. 2). Conceptual use of knowledge is the ideological direction that the knowledge gives to an organisation, whilst instrumental use of knowledge is the administrative or practical application of the knowledge to effect change in an organisation.

The literature suggests that dissemination brings with it a type of formality, the notion of order, precision, mandate, and reliability (Toomey,

Knight, & Barlow, 2016). Conversely, dissemination also conjures hegemonic notions of power relationships, inflexibility, demand, program and compulsory content. Waite, Evans, and Kersh (2014) suggest that dissemination is problematic, and that stakeholders should not only “avoid assumptions about the straightforward dissemination of educational policy but instead explore the contestation, selective appropriation and interpretation of educational initiatives at the policy, organisational and individual level” (p. 202).

Garsed suggests that teachers are being disseminated information and told how to practice, rather than negotiated with for reform, where the consideration of teacher response to change is not as effective as it could be, and that “maintaining teacher input in shaping curriculum and exercising professional reflection and judgement is essential” (Garsed, 2013, p. 25). Without teacher perspectives to shape the implementation and direction of curriculum, there is risk of teacher non-compliance and tangled appropriation of the curriculum. Communication between stakeholders becomes vital.

Currently there exists a complex array of communication options for teachers. These are mainly via their schools’ administration and or the internet which requires digital literacy or competency (Ozdamli & Ozdal, 2015). However, not all teachers are fluent in the use of digital resources (Jordan, 2011). Through use of the internet, teachers encounter numerous options to source the information they require, if they know what to search for, and if they have membership privilege or financial means to access these options or information repositories. Teachers are now able to access a vast range of digitised educational information, from which they are able to assemble meaning and perspective on a range of issues, rather than being delivered a set of hardcopy communiqués as provided by upper level or superordinate stakeholders. However, the Internet is not always a reliable tool for teachers to collect or synthesise information.

Metzger (2007) suggests that easily created and accessed information obscures or diminishes the reliability and accuracy of resources for teachers.

Open repositories, where information may be submitted without peer review (Atenas & Havemann, 2014), often include materials that may be incorrect or shaped for particular agendas by the authors who publish them. At a local or school level, the effectiveness and type of communication between colleagues can also affect the uptake and perspective of an innovation or reform, based on the similarities of their collegial relationship (Rogers, 2003). These similarities, or dissimilarities, are also known as homophily or heterophily and can be viewed between colleagues from within responses to questions seeking a participant's perspective of professional relationships and regard.

Heterophily "is the degree to which two or more individuals who interact are different in certain attributes, including belief, education, social status" (Rogers, 2003, p.38). Heterophily is therefore a measure of the education sector or school culture differences or tensions conveyed by teachers, within the education environment. In contrast, homophily, or value homophily in particular, is used to describe the similarity in professional values between individuals (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). The types of professional or relational communication impacts the uptake and perception of social movement or innovation, particularly in education, such as in curriculum reform (McCroskey, Richmond, & Daly, 1975). The degree of homophily, in particular, impacts internal organisational management, through the quality of in-house communication, the type and quality of information sources, and how knowledge is created and shared (Chesney & Fire, 2014). The connections among stakeholders depends on the "presence of a strong tie between socially similar people" (Reagans, 2005, p. 1374). Positive collegial interaction or communication is an important element in the construction of knowledge and functionality during innovation or change. Social systems can either impede or

encourage innovation and change, dependent on constructed processes and norms and is influenced by heterophily or homophily. Homophily often leads to entrenched culture or traditional perspectives and processes whereby what has been done in the past will be repeated in the future, as steered by individual or institution (Kossinets & Watts, 2009; Rogers, 2003). This means, for example, that the experience of recent implementations or reform, informs teachers' views for support of reform. Teacher uptake of reform is also informed by the time made available for teachers to understand introduced innovation.

The literature suggests that time availability impacts the uptake and relevance of an innovation, but also the pace of adoption or acceptance of innovation diffusion processes (Rogers, 2003). That is, the process that sees information passed from creation to implementation occurs over a superordinate stakeholder stipulated timeframe, for example, by the government or education sector, during which new innovation is translated and adapted. Innovation is interpreted by authoritative stakeholders from inception, and then shared; creating perspectives regarding the viability of the innovation, which leads to the adoption or rejection of it (Rogers, 2003). A study comparing education reform approaches in Hong Kong with the Australian state of New South Wales (Pang, 1998), suggests that gradual, normative or re-educative strategies are conducive for long-term improvement, rather than rushed power-coercive innovation. Gradual implementation of reform ensures a solid and comprehensive uptake, particularly where aspects of a reform are difficult to negotiate for teachers. However, this means that information must be of high clarity, reliable, and be negotiable or modifiable for teachers in their practice.

In the 1980s innovation or information diffusion had been shaped into models designed to organise the flow of crucial materials in education settings (Marsh, 1994). Marsh reorganised Rogers and Shoemaker's 1971 authority-innovation-decision-making (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971) system, which

positioned stakeholders such as teachers as subordinates, as part of an authority model that enables the tracking of how formal processes and decisions are made whilst taking into account the response of individuals from within a setting or system during reform (Harris & Marsh, 2005; Marsh, 1994; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971).

The Authority Model (Harris & Marsh, 2005) or authority-innovation-decision-making process, also suggests that there are two distinct levels of professional power amongst education stakeholders; these are superordinate and subordinate stakeholders, demarcated by the functions, processes, or roles in which the stakeholders are involved (Marsh, 1994; Harris & Marsh, 2005; Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). Superordinate stakeholders in education are typically the government, curriculum authors, and textbook publishers endorsed by governments, national education boards, and authorities. Subordinate stakeholders in education are the localised members of education communities, including education and specialised academic subject associations, school principals, and, vitally, teachers. Superordinate stakeholders are identified as those who have the power to make major decisions at a more influential level compared to other stakeholders, and are typically bureaucrats and politicians. Harris and Marsh's Authority Model (2005, p.26) explains that, typically, an authoritative top-down model is used to facilitate reform in schools. As is the case in Tasmanian education, the model explains that information or reform is collectively filtered from superordinate stakeholders such as the Tasmanian Department of Education, down to the local subordinate stakeholders, including the subject associations, teachers, and principals, at the frontline of education.

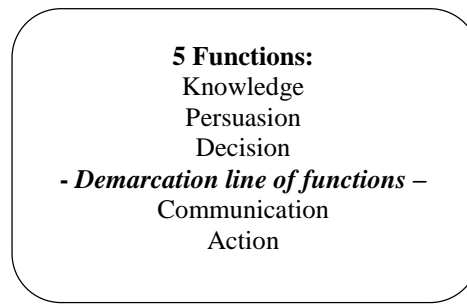
The subordinate or frontline stakeholders are assigned functions of communication and action to physically implement the imposed reforms, as directed from the superordinate heads. This process relies on efficient leadership and transparency of information. Rogers and Shoemaker's 1971 original

authority model, modified by Marsh in 1994, lists five superordinate and subordinate stakeholder functions that are viewed to enable education reform. These five functions of the Authority Model for education reform include those of knowledge, persuasion, decision, communication, and action.

The more recent Authority Model, as adapted in Harris and Marsh's 2005 version, suggests a more transparent and communicative interpretation of the five Rogers and Shoemaker functions between stakeholders, where each stakeholder is able to negotiate and add to the discussion during decision-making processes. According to Harris and Marsh (2005), there still exists a demarcated line of functions between superordinate and subordinate stakeholders.

Under the Harris and Marsh (2005) model (see Figure 2.1), superordinate stakeholders preside over the knowledge, persuasion, and decision functions, since their roles are thought to require the key knowledge and political or administrative power that allows them to "initiate and direct the curriculum development and its dissemination" (p. 25). The subordinate stakeholders are positioned mainly to implement the decisions set by the superordinate stakeholders, with "their functions confined to 'communication' and 'action'" (p. 25). Theoretically, this model suggests that the level to which the subordinate stakeholders are involved or heard is restricted, hence their limited ability to influence the decisions made across their education community. Consequently, what is mandated from above or from superordinates, is implemented without superordinates having opportunity for rigorous question or debate with the superordinate stakeholders, whilst the pressure to perform implementation exists for these subordinates or teachers, to execute change with professional conformity.

## SUPERORDINATE STAKEHOLDERS



## SUBORDINATE STAKEHOLDERS

*Figure 2.1.* Superordinate and Subordinate stakeholder functions (adapted) (Harris & Marsh, 2005, p. 26).

For each of the five functions of the Authority Model, information dissemination occurs mainly through collegial discussion, or accessible and shared documents (Harris & Marsh, 2005; Marsh, 1994). This transfer of knowledge is affected or distorted by the degree of professional homophily, where selective information and perspectives are shared, which shades or frames the knowledge with particular stakeholder ideologies or expectations that are sanctioned by stakeholders (Hargreaves, 2016).

Knowledge for stakeholders is dependent on their exposure to information and how this information is expected to be used (Rogers, 2003). In this first function of the Authority Model, knowledge (Harris & Marsh, 2005) is the flow of information for reform, relayed through communication channels from high-ranking education specialists, through to education departments, from whom the information is further filtered and passed on via school principals or staff in leadership roles, down to faculty heads of staff, and eventually to teachers who implement the reform with their available knowledge and resources. Knowledge can be shared through official documentation or informal processes. This latter process suggests that stakeholders have the opportunity to translate, interrupt or miscommunicate information, which may result in misinformation for those who



receive it. Documents are presented at meetings, or are written communications such as emails, staff bulletins and other publicly disseminated extant texts. Extant texts are those documents or information, which are available to stakeholders to support core materials such as a curriculum for reform and practice (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Burns, 2000). These documents therefore create an information trail as a body of chronological evidence of supporting documents for education reform.

The next function of the Authority Model, persuasion (Harris & Marsh, 2005), is required in order to initiate broader discussion between official curriculum authority bodies such as ACARA and expert English literacy theorists to facilitate discussion between superordinate and subordinate stakeholders. Superordinate stakeholders are interested in the feasibility of an innovation or new curriculum, and seek opinion via broad forum and feedback from teaching groups and representatives to establish a case for policy implementation. This also creates professional rapport for favourable attitudes toward the acceptance of reform by stakeholders (Harris & Marsh, 2005). In this model (Harris & Marsh, 2005), schools are contacted by way of asking for professional opinion, via stakeholder consultation. While feedback opportunities are an important part of this model, they do not always occur. Studies suggest that education environments which support teacher agency (Mockler, 2015) and have “strong leadership, and a collegial working atmosphere, are in a stronger position to respond effectively to externally driven curriculum reform” (Ryder, Banner, & Homer, 2014, p. 128). This implies that reform processes are impacted heavily by local stakeholders and their relationships.

The third function of the Authority Model, decision making (Harris & Marsh, 2005), sees curriculum reform as an official movement, and facilitates wider stakeholder consideration through government discussion in preparation for implementation into states, education sectors, and schools. The Authority Model

observes that information is not officially released or finalised in the decision making stage of policy or curriculum refinement. Schools are only involved in this function through their leadership or faculty heads at formal meetings to help “ratify and legitimise” (Harris & Marsh, 2005, p.27) a decision for possible implementation, and the processes for it. This is an exclusive process as teachers are not yet involved, but are made aware of the curriculum design, from which the reform is debated, adopted, redesigned, or rejected by superordinate players (Rogers, 2003). In this function, teachers remain as the subordinate recipients of change due to the decision-making process being removed from teachers in light of superordinate stakeholder control of the broader education context (Lukacs & Galluzzo, 2014). This part of an authoritative reform process is argued to be indicative of commonly found tensions causing teachers to feel undervalued in the reform process (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). It is only late in the education reform process of the Authority Model (Harris & Marsh, 2005), that this decision-making function moves toward the next, which starts to involve teachers through communication.

The fourth function of the Authority Model, communication (Harris & Marsh, 2005), is where selected information surrounding the new curriculum is gradually passed down from superordinate stakeholders to teachers. This function is hierarchical and dependent on the relationship between stakeholders, which impacts the quality and quantity of communication for teachers to carry out their work. For teachers, “informal discussions with colleagues” (Harris & Marsh, 2005, p.27) via internal superordinate stakeholders such as principals, are noted as a vital communication method in schools, which therefore emphasises the importance of inclusive local collegial relationships. Collegial relationships are influenced by the site context. Effective positive relationships, particularly from school leadership, empower teachers to overcome challenging times such as externally enforced reform (Mausethagen, 2013). This communication function

in the reform process is therefore vital for the final implementation or action (Harris & Marsh, 2005) function.

The action function of the Authority Model (Harris & Marsh, 2005) is the function in which the implementation of a reform physically takes place. It is inclusive of teachers who at this point should be involved in the implementation processes of the new curriculum, including with opportunity for feedback and necessary professional learning and development. The Authority Model notes that contextualised or tailored adaption of innovation is useful for stakeholders, where localised superordinates are able to influence or hold power to control reform for their subordinate stakeholders. Bush (2011) argues that there is need for control of reform processes to the exclusion of subordinate stakeholders such as teachers at early stages of reform decision-making, in order to expedite and ensure that superordinate stakeholders' objectives are being met. However, this exclusion of teachers increases teacher stress and confusion about reform, risking reform resistance and teacher attrition (O'Brien, 1999). The inclusion of teachers in decision-making processes including through their feedback, reduces reform anxiety and resistance, and improves teacher perspectives, thus the effectiveness of educational reform (Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014). Therefore, teachers ought to be considered important stakeholders of the reform process and should be involved from the earliest possible stages of reform.

## **2.3 Summary of Literature Review**

The literature review has considered issues associated with the implementation of education change, and the aspects that influence teacher perspectives of education reform and the contexts which shape these perspectives. Elements that influence the effectiveness of reform for teachers as subordinate or frontline stakeholders have been discussed to anchor, extend awareness of, and

elucidate the in-service experience of reform for teachers working in Tasmanian schools.

This chapter highlights the importance of reform processes, the availability of collegial and systemic support, and the impact that these have on teacher practices and perspectives of education reform. The literature suggests that education reform support is vital for teacher practice as it facilitates basic aspects of teaching during education reform, including transparent education policy administration, and professional learning. This literature review has shown that systemic demands require functional, professional aspects of reform for teaching that must be supported by intelligent dissemination of differentiated and accessible meaningful resources. The literature calls for contextualised or focused study of school sites to explore options for best resourcing and support structures for teachers, particularly during reform to enable greater teacher agency and professional capacity. If a mandate is to be implemented, then stakeholders and their professional capital must be recognised, supported, and continually developed to maintain and sustain long-term education quality for teacher practice and student outcomes. The literature reveals an authoritative superordinate and subordinate top-down approach to reform globally, including in Tasmania, which excludes or bypasses teacher voice that might, through inclusion of teachers' experience, benefit superordinate stakeholder decisions.

Research examining teacher perspectives of education reform in smaller regional contexts such as in Tasmania “is representative of rural and regional areas throughout the developed world in being ripe for pedagogical innovation that links transformational thinking about advocacy with high quality literacy practices” (Brett & Thomas, 2014, p. 67). Further, examination of the Tasmanian context during reform is vital to understanding how to adapt to larger scale national education. Examining the Tasmanian education context “highlight[s] the importance of addressing the particularities of small states [or education

jurisdictions] in the development of educational interventions and reinforces the need for close attention to contextual factors within reform efforts” (Di Biase, 2015, p. 1). Examining reform on a small-scale, will inform larger education decisions (Rowan & Bigum, 2012) such as the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum*, and to add to education research for education stakeholders.

### **3.0 Introduction**

The methodological approaches and processes for this research are defined and described in this chapter. This is a qualitative interpretive (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) case study (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Stake, 2006) informed by poststructuralist theory (Foucault, 1980). The research uses the processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001b; Gee, 2011; Wodak, 2009) to interpret the data. Use of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) allows the data to be rigorously coded and defined by the researcher, in the analysis of the research participants' language. Codes are the labels or names for issues that a researcher constructs and applies to data whenever they are identified from the analysis of the data. The coding process using constructivist grounded theory for the data analysis phase then produces themes. The use of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001b; Gee, 2011; Wodak, 2009) enable the exploration of the research aims through the use of these detailed, transparent and thorough processes (Hiller, 1998).

This chapter is presented in six main sections. Section 3.1 outlines the research aims, which consider the implementation of curriculum reform for Tasmanian education system English teachers. Following this, section 3.2 presents the research design and sets out the qualitative research methodology used and the justification for the use of an interpretive case study approach for this research project. Section 3.3 provides the theoretical underpinnings of the research, which have shaped the researcher's choice of methodology and

understanding of discourse analysis in order to formulate the analysis chapter of this thesis.

The research processes, which are undertaken for this project, include gaining ethics approval from the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network and the Tasmanian Department of Education, to allow for the collection of appropriate data. This section also includes an outline of the steps used in the selection of participants, the information letters and the participant consent forms for the research participants. Section 3.4 describes the research instruments and when they were employed for data generation, including a questionnaire, a semi-structured interview schedule, and the collection of pre-existing extant texts.

Section 3.5 presents the data production and collection processes. Section 3.5 examines the types of data collected including questionnaire responses by teacher participants and teacher participant interviews, informed by relevant *Australian Curriculum* extant texts.

Section 3.6 describes the analytical framework and theoretical approaches to the data analysis used for this research. It outlines the use of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001, 2009) processes through a poststructural feminist lens (Foucault, 1980; Weedon, 1987). Finally, section 3.7 outlines the analytical stages of this research, informed by poststructural feminist theory, to prepare for the findings in the following chapters.

### 3.1 Research Aims

The implementation of a new curriculum requires the acquisition of both pedagogical and content knowledge for teachers and administrative support from school leadership. The purpose of the research is to explore teacher participant perspectives of their experience of the processes of mandated curriculum reform. This engagement with research participants for data collection allows for thorough interpretation (Glaser & Strauss) of data through the use of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001a) through a poststructural feminist lens (Foucault, 1980; Kress, 1985).

An additional purpose of this research is to identify where support and professional development for teachers is needed. Through a qualitative interpretive case study, this research explores the perspectives of qualified practicing Southern Tasmanian English teachers on the implementation of secondary English in the *Australian Curriculum*. The teachers were from three education sectors in Tasmania. This study is informed by poststructural feminist theory to allow exploration of the experience of reform processes for teachers.

Chapter One provides an overview of issues surrounding curriculum reform for Tasmanian secondary school English teachers, with background and context for this research. Context is vital to the case study approach, as it provides a snapshot of a bounded or particular system (Burns, 2000) such as a school or collection of schools at a given time.

#### 3.1.1 Research Aim One

Research Aim One focuses on exploration of teacher participant perspectives of the processes of educational reform in their school and the education sector under which they are employed. The teacher participant



perspectives include observations and opinions from teachers who have experienced the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: English* in seven Southern Tasmanian schools from the Independent, State and Catholic education sectors. These teacher participant perspectives are explored and dominant discourses are constructed from the data.

In Research Aim One, teacher participant perspectives of curriculum implementation processes enables the exploration of how teachers worked with and perceived the implementation of the *AC: E*. These perspectives include teacher understandings of the communication and strategies used to promulgate and implement the *AC: E*. The term ‘practice’ is used to refer to the daily pragmatic aspects of teaching, which is informed by teacher subject content knowledge.

Research Aim One explores teacher perspectives of stakeholder roles, responsibilities and possible teacher-identified hegemonic challenges. In considering this research aim, the researcher positions teachers as vital stakeholders of change for the education system and students (Rowan & Bigum, 2012), rather than as compliant technicians (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2015) or “corporate agents” (Newman & Clarke, 2009, p. 82) for politically motivated or sanctioned reform.

### **3.1.2 Research Aim Two**

Research Aim Two explores teacher stakeholder professional needs for English subject teachers in Tasmanian secondary schools. These professional needs are identified by teacher participants in this research project during initial and early implementation of the *AC: E*, which are recognised by the teacher participants as necessary to sustain implemented educational reform (Fullan, 2011). Here, teachers highlight the major issues, which impact on their practice

and professional capacity during educational reform. The professional needs of teachers during the implementation of the new national *Australian Curriculum*, may come about after teachers' discovery of new demands for subject delivery and assessment requirements to meet the *AC: E* reform needs.

Research Aim Two assists in identifying the needs of secondary school English teachers and how they can be supported in an attempt to close the gap or improve the relationship between theory and practice during educational change.

## **3.2 Research Design**

### **3.2.1 Qualitative Research Design**

Qualitative research employs a holistic approach to the investigation of social issues. Qualitative research is a flexible approach of inquiry that allows for analysis of social research sites such as educational contexts including in schools, and through education stakeholder perspectives (Charmaz, 2000, 2003, 2006; Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015; Mertens, 2014). A qualitative research paradigm, as used in this research, best suits this educational research. Qualitative research provides the opportunity for a rich description of a set of studied events, including relevant philosophical approaches through interpretive discussion (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) around professional practice (Merriam, 2009). The qualitative research approach used in this research includes the selection of an authentic context, which involves teacher participants engaged in employment during curriculum reform. This research provides a rich ethnographic account of the *AC: E* reform, with the researcher engaged in data collection and synthesis throughout the duration of the project.

This qualitative research project uses the specific data collection strategies and data analysis processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2000, 2006) and application of a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013b),

which are defined in section 3.6. However, constructivist grounded theory processes (Charmaz, 2006) are also used to provide some quantitative measures. The codes and categories that are identified by the researcher, make transparent the identification and significance of occurring and recurring ideas. This process assists in the organisation and construction of dominant themes. This methodological approach enables a rigorous and flexible approach through a thorough interpretation and analysis of the data (Creswell, 2003; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### **3.2.2 Case Study**

Case study approaches in qualitative research impact students and teachers, as they explore:

mindsets that underpin new ways of thinking about the purposes and processes of schooling. They provide insights into a diverse range of modestly ambitious practices that respect a commitment to positioning students as active producers of knowledge that is meaningful to and for them in their present and their futures (Rowan, 2012b, p. 13).

A case study (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015; Stake, 2006) approach is used in this study to examine a bounded or specific system (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2003, 2012) such as a collection of teachers.

This study involved the participation of 12 voluntary southern Tasmanian secondary school English teachers. The participants' perspectives of, and professional needs for, the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: English*, from 2012 to 2015 are explored. Teacher responses are examined to add to broader national research into teacher needs for reform and reform implementation processes. This case study approach delivers pertinent perspectives from teachers in their practice of education reform from within a

unique context or point in educational history, “not normally accessible to researchers” (Yin, 2014, p. 215). The research involves stakeholders from across the education sectors of southern Tasmania. This case study approach is not concerned with the discovery of a universal or generalisable truth but rather the exploration of teacher perspectives of reform in Tasmanian education sectors. Whilst Abercrombie and colleagues (2006) believe that case studies cannot be generalised, the methods used can be applied to similar or larger research contexts.

The case study approach is highly flexible and interpretive and allows for authentic representation of the education context during social change (Charmaz, 2006; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Case studies are highly descriptive accounts of particular contexts and offer detailed observation of relevant issues found in genuine and specific milieus (Yin, 2003, 2012). According to Burns (2000), case studies are appropriate for educational settings as they present detail about specific experiences in context and the opportunity to interrogate organisational processes. Inclusion of teacher participant perspectives from across the Tasmanian education sectors allows for representation of the Tasmanian teaching context during education reform. The cross-sectoral sampling through a case study approach elucidates detailed aspects or layers of “complex social phenomena” (Yin, 2003, p. 2) of professional perspective otherwise lost in broader or less descriptive approaches. Case studies are exploratory, focusing on “process [and] discovery rather than confirmation” (Burns, 2000, p. 460), which allows for the story of curriculum implementation experience and perspective to be articulated accurately by the researcher via teacher participants.

Case study research sites are bounded systems where the place, time, or the event being inspected is “an entity in itself” (Burns, 2000, p. 460). Burns (2000) describes the case study as an acceptable qualitative and ethnographic

approach, which “can be usefully employed in most areas of education” (p. 459). Case study research is “used to gain in-depth understanding replete with meaning for the subject, focusing on process rather than outcome, on discovery rather than confirmation” (Burns, 2000, p. 460). Because this study is specific to the particular *AC: E* implementation in Tasmanian secondary schools, multiple and rich data sources are necessary so as to develop a deeper understanding of that site (Creswell, 2012). Deeper understanding of context is recognised as a vital aspect in case study research design, since it allows the researcher to collate a more reliable body or chain of evidence to extract and create meaning, themes, and discourses from the data (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Smulyan, 2000; Yin, 2003).

There are five main steps involved in case study research (Burns, 2000; Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2003, 2012), which follow the same general order. The first step is to formulate, define, and clarify the intent of the research, how it relates to the research problem, and identifies the type of case study that it is. The second step is to discuss ethical considerations, such as how the researcher gains ethical approval and access to the research site or subject, including the type and number of participants, and guarantees of participant confidentiality and safety. The third step describes the types of data and how they are to be collected. A range of data sources are used for triangulation. The fourth step is to analyse the data within a suitable analytical framework for overall understanding and description. This step develops the themes as located in the data for analysis. The final step is to develop the research findings or conclusions with the research design based on the researcher’s description, analysis and interpretation of the data.

In this case study research, constructivist grounded theory informs these five steps in case study design. The processes develop, refine and redefine the research project’s direction, including how and where data sources are used.

Using a constructivist grounded theory approach allows for the “findings [to be] literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111).

This qualitative interpretive (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) research uses a poststructural feminist position to “gain in-depth understanding replete with meaning for the subject” (Burns, 2000, p. 460). Through this theoretical position, the data gathered to explore the research aims, are exposed and “made available for scrutiny, comment and (re)negotiation, as part of the process” (Maynard, 2013, p. 25) by the researcher for analysis and possible further research.

### **3.3 Theoretical underpinnings of the research**

#### **3.3.1 Poststructural feminist theory**

A poststructural feminist theoretical position informs the researcher’s interpretation of the perspectives of a selection of English subject teachers through their experience of the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: English*, during 2012-2015 in Tasmania. Poststructural feminist theory informs the interpretation of conflicting accounts of a set of events or experiences (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Weedon, 1997) (Weedon, 1997). Poststructural feminist theory does not facilitate “finding out ‘exactly’ what is going on” (St Pierre, 2000, p. 477), rather, it enables the researcher to “examine the function and effects of whatever structures” (St. Pierre, 2000, p. 479) are being viewed, where meaning of experience is contingent on context (Foucault & Rabinow, 1997).

A critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001a) is used to analyse the data. Exploration of discourse relates the “expressions of social practices and contexts [to create a] methodological connection of discourse and dialogue with social power” (Given, 2008, p. 152). The critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001a) is developed from the processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006).

A poststructural feminist perspective informs the deconstruction of a studied environment. This deconstruction typically examines binaries involving power relations or ideologies, through the identification of issues through specific signs or instances located in the data by the researcher (Boyne, 1990; Given, 2008; Weedon, 1997). Derrida (1974) suggests that knowledge or meaning is transient and relatable to specific contexts. Therefore, knowledge or inference is a “temporary retrospective fixing” (Weedon, 1987, p. 25) influenced by the dominant power of a particular context, where the “meaning of signs is not intrinsic but relational” (Weedon, 1987, p. 23). Meaning, or “language and the range of subject positions which it offers always exists in historically specific discourses which inhere in social institutions and practices and can be organized analytically in discursive fields” (Weedon, 1987, pp. 34-35). This research aims to explore and build discursive positions regarding educational reform, through the voices of the teacher participants.

### **3.3.2 Language and Discourse**

This section defines discourse through a poststructural lens (Foucault, 1980) and the importance of language in the construction of discourse (Weedon, 1987). It also shows how the use of language influences creation of discourse in qualitative research, from a poststructural feminist theory position.

#### **3.3.2.1 Language**

Language is central to the construction of meaning for expression of knowledge common to, or shaped by, a particular time and site, culture, or ideology. Language “enables people to think, speak, and give meaning to the world around them” (Weedon, 1987, p. 32). Poststructural feminist theory uses

language which informs discourse, as a tool to analyse, define and contest social organisation or individual position, where knowledge or “subjectivity is constructed” (Weedon, 1997, p. 21). The poststructural feminist perspective takes the view that because language is used and valued by the individual bound by a particular culture, that language is an authentic and reliable account of the environment being studied. Language is a “temporary” (Weedon, 1987, p. 25) interpretation of signifiers, or ideas, located in a discursive context (Fairclough, 2013b; Peet & Hartwick, 2015). Poststructural feminist theory views language as not having permanent intrinsic meaning, rather, that it is indefinite and “not guaranteed by the subject which speaks it” (Weedon, 1997, p. 22). This view informs the case study approach used in this research since the analysis uses the language of the research participants during the particular time of the AC: *E* reform. This contextualised language is interpreted by the researcher with a subjective rather than an objective approach.

A Foucauldian poststructural view of language focuses on discursive and social practices around issues of power and knowledge (Foucault, 2003; Weedon, 1997). This view of language informs specific discourses (Fairclough, 2001b), to question or at least consider the “relationships between language and society” (Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005, pp. 1-2).

Threadgold (2003) suggests that language is considered a vital part of cultural or qualitative studies, including through a poststructural feminist perspective, where:

realities and subjectivities are constructed in and by language; that subjects construct themselves and the worlds they inhabit in their everyday uses of language; that power relations are constructed and deconstructed through these processes; that what we call the social and culture are similarly constructed and deconstructed; that this activity is characterised by narrativity, that changing narratives, telling stories



differently, might change the social world and that the goal of work on  
and with language is a politics committed to social change. (p. 6)

This research considers research participants' perspectives and researcher interpretations or discursive positions to be valuable extrapolations from the exploration of curriculum reform experience. The use of language to develop discourse is central to a poststructural feminist exploration of institution and the individual (Weedon, 1997).

### **3.3.2.2 Discourse**

In this research, a discourse is an organised set of statements (Kress, 1985) from the collected and analysed data, which is constructed by the researcher. This is a flexible process, dependent on context and the responses of the research participants since an "order of discourse is not a closed or rigid system, but rather an open system, which is put at risk by what happens in actual interactions" (Fairclough, 2003, p. 207). This open system is therefore shaped by an induced or contextually informed discourse. An induced discourse is shaped, but not forced, through the context of the research (Ruiz Ruiz, 2009). This shaping is influenced, too, by the selection of data collection strategies by the researcher, such as interviews where the researcher may select focused questions suitable for extracting relevant data, based on the data that the researcher may have already collected.

A discourse is a reflection of the context and is inductively or progressively extracted by the researcher during the data analysis process. Qualitative research "involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3). Discourses are constructed through the close reading, sifting, examination, and consideration and coding of data, and applying and reorganising categories of ideas that dominate, or are found by the researcher

to be important. Researcher identification of emergent discourses is the result of intersubjectivity or interpretation or understanding of the studied context (Ruiz Ruiz, 2009).

A discursive analysis through a poststructural feminist approach opens the opportunity for the examination and challenging of hegemonic practices (Lather, 2001; Weedon, 1987). Issues of power or hegemonic practice are often found embedded in institutional practices or where there is an enforced regime or policy. The concept of hegemony or authority assists in the creation and analysis of discourses such as those found relating to policy, to enable exposition of issues that require resolution for stakeholders, or further research (Fairclough, 2003, 2013a; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Foucault (2003) notes that issues of hegemony, domination or power are not homogenous and are not exclusively held by those who have it or are subjected to it. Authoritative hegemonic elements are found in institutions or social phenomena, where power or authority exists dependent on the relationships in those contexts, but “functions only when [power] is part of a chain [involving individuals who are in a position to both] submit to and exercise this power” (Foucault, 2003, p. 29). Further, Foucault (2003) posits that hegemony is not applied to “inert or consenting targets” (p. 29), but passes through individuals.

A critical discourse analysis allows the researcher to identify issues of social concern such as curriculum reform for secondary school English teachers, to identify common areas of concern through the examination of teacher responses. Critical discourse analysis helps to identify obstacles in order to find ways to overcome these, then to reflect critically on the analysis of the findings (Fairclough, 2001b; Kress, 1985). This is a critical discourse analysis, which has been utilised by this research in order to provide an analytical framework from which ontological positions or meaning can be developed through an unbiased perspective, as a “system [...] of representation” (Gee, 2003, p. 9).

### **3.3.3 Researcher Subjectivity and Reflexivity**

This research takes the view that subjectivity is informed by the discourses available to the subject, since in a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006), the data influences or directs the researcher's analysis. The emergent theories or dominant discourses from research are dependent on the researcher's "position and perspective" (Fook, 2002, p. 89), which suggests that prior knowledge is integral to construction of dominant discourses. Subjectivity is the prior knowledge and beliefs that position the researcher and the researcher's interpretation of particular contexts being investigated. Prior knowledge here is developed from reviewed literature and researcher experience within education contexts. A poststructural feminist theoretical position supports researcher subjectivity in that it enables unrestricted but rigorous knowledge construction and analysis of the studied context. The researcher's exploration of the resulting dominant discourses or sets of knowledge are constructed by the researcher. Further, it allows the researcher to enter the data with some preconceptions or informed perspectives that can be explored through the coding and analysis of data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Varga-Dobai, 2012). Research informed by poststructural feminist theory does not claim objectivity.

Poststructural feminist theory is a way of "seeing what frames our seeing – spaces of constructed visibility and incitements to see which constitute power/knowledge" (Lather, 1993, p. 675). Since the researcher can only impart his or her own understanding of what is examined, a representation or subjective account of the examined context is offered. Issues of legitimacy arise where researcher knowledge cannot be tested against an objective reality, preconceived circumstance, or the researcher's lack of knowledge about the studied environment (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001). What is constructed through a

critical discourse analysis is a set of major findings or issues constructed through transparent analysis and reporting based on rigorous data analysis processes, and the researcher's interpretation of it. Interpretation of events can take as many forms as there are people or researchers (Moi, 1987), therefore, in consideration of researcher knowledge, it can be assumed that a level of researcher subjectivity is used as a means to achieve a transparent analysis. The researcher's experiences and suppositions "influence and inform how the researcher conducts his or her research, [how he or she] relates to research participants, and represents them in written reports" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 188). Researcher knowledge or subjectivity, therefore impacts researcher ability to consider their data analysis approaches.

Reflexivity is the researcher's ability to consider bias, reconsider interpretation or meaning of data and their influence on the data as it is observed and analysed. Reflexivity is the researcher's stance on and consideration of their own subjectivity or interpretation of the data (Naples, 2003). Reflexivity is achieved through the researcher's consideration of the data, by "deconstructing the language used and its rhetorical functions" (Finlay, 2002, p. 223) to construct an understanding. This is a poststructural feminist approach to data analysis, wherein "the politics of deconstruction is precisely about unsettling, displacing hegemonic conceptual systems in order to effect social change" (Threadgold, 2003, p. 8).

The relationship with, and sensitivity to, research participants' perspectives, are seen as vital elements in respectful authorship, particularly in the exploration of hegemonic tensions found in studied environments (Naples, 2003). This research acknowledges subjectivity, where reflexive practices or the "continual reflection" (Haralambos & Holborn, 2013, p. 856) such as reconsideration of assumptions and analysis or subjective direction, allow the researcher to critically re-examine researcher approaches to the analysis of data. A reflexive approach allows for reflection of the researcher's data analysis

processes. The researcher is “the instrument through which all meaning comes and that she shapes the research and is shaped by it” (Lichtman, 2010, p. 122). In this research, reflexivity is a process where researcher actions or influence, assumptions and prior knowledge are reflected on in the data analysis processes, to create a more balanced view of collected data (Wetherell et al., 2001) to create a “polyvocality; not one story but many” (Finlay, 2002, p. 223) in the construction of discourse. In poststructural feminist research, reflexivity assists in preventing the perpetuation of discursive stereotypes and avoids repetition of familiar hegemonic structures (Kaufman, 2013; Pillow, 2003). In this ethnographic case study, reflexivity is a theoretical tool that assists in the consideration of the researcher as affective (Lincoln & Guba, 2003).

Researcher “[r]eflexivity demands steady, uncomfortable assessment about the interpersonal and interstitial knowledge-producing dynamics of qualitative research, in particular, acute awareness as to what unrecognized elements in the researchers’ background contribute” (Olesen, 2011, p. 135). In-depth consideration of researcher position and knowledge drives the researcher’s discourse analysis through a “critical reflection on the practice and process of research and the role of the researcher. It acknowledges the [impact of] mutual relationship between the researcher and who and what is studied” (Lichtman, 2010, p. 122).

The researcher of this study is positioned both as an English teacher of secondary school students, but also as an interested member of the education community who has had access to a portion of the *Australian Curriculum: English* texts, with variance in the level of access to these texts. These positions allow for a privileged perspective as a critical observer and broader stakeholder. Hegemonic issues within teacher experiences of curriculum reform and implementation processes in Tasmania for secondary school English teachers are therefore established, problematised, and discursively presented by the researcher

through a critical discourse analysis, seeking justification of and possible solution to such (Fairclough, 2013b), to “avoid[...] methodological pitfalls” (Kaufman, 2013, p. 71) through researcher reflexivity. The poststructural feminist perspective, which informs this thesis, acknowledges the researcher’s subjectivity to facilitate an open and rigorous treatment of data. This allows for acceptance of emergent meaning found by the researcher, from within the collected data.

### **3.3.4 Reliability and Validity**

Reliability and validity are measures of the adequacy of the research analysis (Crano, Brewer, & Lac, 2014). The analysis uses the processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2013) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985). Threadgold (2003) notes that a critical discourse analysis is a useful, subjective approach to qualitative data analysis, citing that “[p]art of the richness of such analyses is in what can be seen and read from different perspectives. However, these differences do not sit easily with arguments about objective, systematic, replicable and verifiable social science methodology” (p. 11). This research is informed by a poststructural feminist theory, which accepts the researcher’s interpretation of data from specific studied events.

Reliability ensures that data within a particular context can be examined with consistency. Crano and colleagues (2014) define that “reliability is the consistency that a measurement instrument assesses a given construct” (p. 45), which supports the researcher’s use of a constructivist grounded theory approach to cement the coding approaches used across the data. Reliability can be tested qualitatively, by building redundancy or duplication of questions that encourage discussion of particular ideas, into the data collection instruments such as in questionnaires and interviews. This can be done simply by rephrasing the same question (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007) to ascertain or confirm responses from

the research participants, to remove “noise” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 174) from the data. Redundancy allows for “sufficiently plausible” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 174) data saturation through asking repeated or rephrased questions, as it gives responders the opportunity to provide more detail around the same question. Therefore, reliability can also be achieved if a research project’s data collection instruments include different strategies such as the use of a questionnaire and interview, where the same question is asked in both formats to enable greater reliability and depth in participant responses.

Validity is considered the rigour of a study, which is problematic in qualitative research. Davies and Dodd (2002) note that “accepting that there is a quantitative bias in the concept of rigor, we [can] now move on to develop our reconception of rigor by exploring subjectivity, reflexivity” (p. 281). Validity is dependent on the study focus of the researcher and their methodological approach, which should present transparency in the methods of data collection and analysis, gaining legitimacy and authenticity of knowledge (Lather, 1993). Lather (1993) posits that validity is a “regime of truth” (p. 674) that does not agree with a poststructural position, which seeks the elucidation of immeasurable emergent and emancipatory discourse (Flint, 2015). Since poststructural feminist theory views data as contextually sensitive and temporal, validity cannot be rigorously tested or marked against criteria or previous contexts (Lather, 1993). Poststructural feminist theory problematises concepts of replicability and absolute validity (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Levett, 2007), since it is the researcher’s interpretation of data which “de-center[s] validity [to create] multiple, partial, endlessly deferred” meaning (Lather, 1993, p. 675). Validity is a finite construction that bends toward closing rather than opening discursive possibilities. The concept of validity cannot provide “epistemological guarantees” (Lather, 1993, p. 675), particularly in case-study research, since contextualised research sites cannot be replicated in others. Rather, validity is

subjective and represses social representation “in pursuit of an unrealized ideal” (Lather, 1993, p. 677). Interpretation is reflexive, where independent accounts of the world through discourse allow equally valid interpretations of context to exist (Gray, 2013). Validity is not necessary in research that is informed by poststructural feminist theory, as “structures and phenomena that we are led to believe exist in objective reality hold no absolute validity” (Levett, 2007, p. 11) since the research participants’ voices and the data explored are an account or interpretation of a particular time and place. The articulation of research participants’ perspectives of structural processes challenge possible structural hegemony, which “take[s] into account local and specific contexts within a critical perspective” (Levett, 2007, p. 45) through the researcher’s reflexivity and “ideology of representation” (Morrow, 1991, p. 161).

Interpretation of data must be warranted with literature and carefully selected and analysed data. The literature review, data analysis processes, and discourse analysis provides the rigour of this study. These sections in a thesis are “ideological sites in which [the researcher will] claim, locate, evaluate and defend [their] position” (Charmaz, 2006, p.163). Rigour is achieved in this study through adherence to constructivist grounded theory methodology. This research uses an ethnographic approach, which enables the researcher to carry out the detailed analysis of data and review of literature. This research also obtains rigour through reflexivity by the use of the researcher’s coding strategies and acknowledgement of the poststructural feminist theoretical position that informs this research.

### **3.3.5 Triangulation**

Triangulation (Creswell, 1998) involves the convergence of data from multiple data collection sources and “is largely a vehicle for cross-validation



when two or more distinct methods are found to be congruent and yield comparable data” (Jick, 1983, p. 136). This research employs a triangulation process to analyse collated data in a systematic manner. Triangulation serves as an additional tool for reliability through transparent and consistent data analysis, and assists in the production of dominant themes or discourses (Pierce, 2008). This creates a more substantive and richer view of the studied context (Burns, 2000; Lichtman, 2010; Patton, 1990; Sarantakos, 2005). A constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) methodology requires a variety of data sources in order to assist in the analysis process. This research analyses data from three sources: questionnaire responses, audio transcripts from one-on-one semi-structured interviews, and collation of the pre-existing and accessible extant secondary school English curriculum documents which were accessible to Tasmanian secondary school teachers and the researcher.

By using these different data sources, the findings from across the data “provide corroborating evidence [...] to shed light on a theme or perspective” (Creswell, 1998, p. 202). Multiple meanings are able to be made through this corroborated evidence, and converge (Yin, 2012), which strengthens the reliability of this research.

### **3.4 Research processes**

This research project required a number of phases prior to commencing the collection of extant texts and voluntary participant data. These phases included initial Human Research Ethics Committee approval, information letter and consent form production, construction of research instruments, approval of research instruments, research site and sample selection and participants of the research project. These phases are explained below.

### **3.4.1 Commencing the study: Ethics approval**

Ethical considerations are essential in all research. Case studies are ethnographic – they require fieldwork, so must ensure that the participants within the research site or culture being studied, are not subjected to undue stress or negative implications (Creswell, 2012). The research project participants must be fully briefed and aware of the project’s aims and data collecting methods.

Transparency is particularly significant in this project since, for teachers, time is limited and the preservation of confidentiality is important for their professional roles. These ethical considerations influence the types of data that are collected.

In Tasmania, conducting research that involves human participation requires approval via the relevant research ethics committees, and other relevant stakeholder authorities to ensure good research practice. Proposed data collection from Tasmanian Department of Education, Catholic Education, and Independent Schools Tasmania teachers and resource repositories required ethics approval from the University of Tasmania Faculty of Education ethics committee, the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), and the Tasmanian Department of Education Performance Services (EPS). Ethical clearance to undertake research across the education sectors was granted by HREC Tasmania (H13010) and the Tasmanian Department of Education EPS (DoE File number: 2013-37). Documentation of these approvals is included in Appendix A.

#### ***3.4.1.1 Production and provision of the Information letter and consent form***

Ethics approval was received from HREC and EPS. Once relevant ethical approval was granted, the research sites could be approached and invited to participate in the study. The approved information and consent forms were distributed to all contacted potential secondary school research sites. Teachers

were given the option to participate or ignore the invitation to participate in the proposed research. The teachers who agreed to participate were provided with the electronic and hardcopy versions of the information letter, consent forms and questionnaire. Twelve signed consent forms and completed questionnaires were returned to the researcher. The researcher then contacted participants via email and telephoned to clarify details of the research project. Mutually agreeable meeting times were organised, for additional data collection. The follow-up interviews were organised to suit interviewees. Copies of the ethically approved information sheet and consent form are available in Appendix A of this thesis.

### **3.4.2 Selection of research sites**

The selection of research sites was important to this study, as the perspectives of secondary-school English subject teachers from across Tasmanian education sectors was necessary to provide a broad account of curriculum reform experience in Tasmania.

The researcher contacted the Principals and English faculty leaders of relevant schools from the Hobart and greater Hobart area by telephone and email, to gauge school leadership interest in the study. The researcher also contacted a Tasmanian professional association for English teachers, the Tasmanian Association for the Teaching of English (TATE), to ascertain broader interest, including of classroom teachers, in the study. Interested parties who agreed to participate were then formally invited to participate in the study with information letters, consent forms and the project's questionnaire (see Appendices A and B). The formal information sheet provided an overview of the research requirements of participants and assurance of ethical conduct and participant anonymity. A total of 12 secondary school English teachers from all three education sectors, the Tasmanian Government Department of Education, Catholic and Independent,

encompassing seven secondary schools from the Hobart and greater Hobart areas, opted to participate in the study. The research participants' education sectors of employment have been de-identified in order to provide a broad perspective of educational reform in Tasmania, and to assist in further protecting the anonymity of the research participants as part of the researcher's adherence to ethical conduct. There was a low teacher participation rate in the research.

The small sample of teachers aligned with the researcher's choice of an in-depth case study approach. The purposive sample (Burns, 2000) allowed for insight into the implementation of the *AC: E*, from a cohort of Tasmanian secondary school English teachers.

The participating teachers were employed at a range of schools from across the three Tasmanian education sectors. All sites had implemented or were partway through the implementation phase of the *AC: E* at the time of the study (2013-2015). Each education sector had its own implementation timeline determined by the superordinate stakeholders of these education sectors.

### **3.4.3 Sampling**

Theoretical sampling is a component of constructivist grounded theory used to check data of the research with room to collect further "pertinent data to elaborate and refine categories in your emerging theory" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 96), thus addressing possible theoretical gaps identified through the coding process, which then assists in the write-up of the findings. Theoretical sampling is encouraged to be used toward the end of data analysis when gaps may be apparent after the formation of categories and allows for data saturation, which strengthens emergent theories and further data is not required (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001). Theoretical sampling is related to purposive and

opportunity sampling (Burns, 2000, p. 93; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 27; Sarantakos, 2005).

Purposive and convenient selection of research participants was considered. Participants from local school sites to the researcher were deliberately chosen for ease of access geographically so as to afford physical contact for the interview stage of data collection. The sample is most “relevant to the project” (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 164) since participants who were available and who volunteered their participation, were practising teachers who have been involved in the implementation of the AC: *E*.

#### **3.4.4 Participants of the research project**

The participants in this research project were 12 qualified practising secondary school English subject teachers from across seven Tasmanian secondary schools, separate from the researcher’s place of employment at a school. All of the research participants were secondary school English subject teachers, with three of these participants being English faculty leaders (Heads of Department). One participant was a relief English teacher and two did not want their school site to be revealed to the researcher. All research participants were experienced secondary school English teachers who had been working in education as classroom teachers for school year levels seven to ten. Two of these teachers also had several years of experience teaching English internationally and interstate. These 12 participants undertook the questionnaire for this research.

Eight of the 12 participants opted in for a follow-up semi-structured, one-on-one interview. All participants cited time constraints as an issue for carrying out the interview stage of data collection.

To maintain anonymity in this research, participants were allocated pseudonyms to remove possibility of identification. Pseudonyms created for

participants, were of the form 'P#'; with 'P' for participant, and the '#' being replaced with a number for record-keeping and anonymity purposes.

### **3.5 Data Production and Collection**

This section explains how the data of this research, was collected. It describes the data collection instruments, specifically, the use of questionnaire and interviews, and the collection of the accessible extant texts. It also briefly describes the research limitations of the study.

#### **3.5.1 Research instruments**

The data collected for this qualitative research was sourced via questionnaire responses, interview transcripts, and accessible relevant *AC: E* extant texts.

Questionnaires enable researchers to consider initial responses about the otherwise hidden responses to general and focused questions, which can be followed up with further questions and or interviews. Participants of this study were first given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire with closed and open-ended response sections. Questionnaire responses afforded identification of general and common ideas about the participants' experiences of the *AC: E* implementation. This facilitated points of interest for the researcher to follow-up with participants in the ensuing interviews.

The responses from the questionnaire assisted the researcher to create a tailored, semi-structured interview schedule for each participant. The HREC and EPS ethically approved interview schedule (see Appendix B) was used as a guide during the interview to assist the researcher in keeping the interview discussion on point. The interviews were open-ended, semi-structured and guided by the

participant, allowing the participants to feel comfortable to speak about the issues of concern to them about the implementation of the *AC: E*.

Audio recording of one-on-one semi-structured interviews provided rich qualitative data. Open-ended questions were used to draw detailed answers otherwise not recorded by written response in the questionnaire (Creswell, 2012). These recordings were transcribed and edited. Participant names and other identifiable material, were replaced with pseudonyms, such as 'P1', for qualifying statements and information. The transcripts were individually reviewed for approval by participants for content clarity and anonymity – a process which adheres to ethical standards, prior to researcher analysis of the data.

The questionnaire responses and interview transcript data were read and coded by the researcher, using line-by-line selective-coding of ideas and issues, through a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2000, 2006; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) methodology is elaborated in section 3.6.1. The questionnaire and interview data served as the core data of this research.

Inclusion of pre-existing *AC: E* extant texts as data support (see section 3.5.4, below) also assisted in the creation of semi-structured interview questions and the generation of theoretical direction for richer contextual analysis, suitable for the case study and data analysis approaches of this research. The collection and analysis of *AC: E* related texts or information from school leadership and education sector resource repositories, was done in order for the researcher to gain awareness of the types of *AC: E* materials that the teachers had access to, and the processes in which the teachers gained information and instruction concerning the *AC: E*.

The *AC: E* extant text data were collated throughout the life of the research project. Authorisation for researcher access to extant texts, impeded collection of materials, in some cases. A flexible data collection approach was

taken by the researcher to enable the order of data collection phases to match data and research participants' availability. A flexible approach to data collection also afforded researcher reflexivity in the data collection processes and the creation of tailored interview schedules for individual participants, based on the content of their questionnaire responses.

The data collection sequence for this project is shown in Table 3.1 (see Appendix E.3.1), indicates the type of data collected and when. It is important to note that the extant text collection continued into 2015, as reviews of the *Australian Curriculum* by ACARA and Australian government for the 2014, school year were not completed until this time.

The major sources of data of this research included the questionnaire and semi-structured interview transcript data. These data sources provide a subjective context or qualitative snapshot of the experiences of the *AC: E* reform for teachers, by research participants, not found in other considered data approaches. One approach that was initially considered but not used by the researcher was a focus group interview. This was rejected by the researcher, since it was considered by the researcher that dominant teachers would intimidate or block less confident teachers. Further, the researcher considered that less dominant teachers would not answer or contribute as fully in the presence of dominant or superordinate colleagues. Further, in a focus group scenario, participants would not have participant anonymity, as discussed by Gibbs, who says that focus groups:

discourage certain people from participating, for example those who are not very articulate or confident, and those who have communication problems or special needs. The method of focus group discussion may also discourage some people from trusting others with sensitive or personal information. In such cases personal interviews or the use of



workbooks alongside focus groups may be a more suitable approach.

Finally, focus groups are not fully confidential or anonymous, because the material is shared with the others in the group (Gibbs, 1997, para. 15)

The researcher selected individual interviews, where participants were able to express with greater confidence than in a focus group situation, their perspectives of curriculum reform in specific contextual detail, and at length. Contextualisation in case study approach is vital (Babione, 2014; Fetterman, 2014; Goffman, 1958). The researcher acknowledges this through the use of extant texts, and the employment of open-ended questions in the questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule, to situate and strengthen the effectiveness of the data.

### **3.5.2 Questionnaires**

Questionnaires provide a base of information that is documented by a respondent. Use of a questionnaire enables the controlled delivery of questions, where each participant receives the same set of questions. Question wording may impact participants' responses.

The questions in the research questionnaire (see Appendix B.1), were designed to provide basic detail about the teacher participants, such their teaching experience and if they had experienced educational reform prior to the implementation of the *AC: E*. The questions used, allow opportunity for the research participants to provide authentic and open-ended responses inclusive of teacher perspectives about aspects of *AC: E* reform experience, such as the types of, and access to, professional learning, for the participants. Questionnaire responses provide data for the researcher to follow-up in interviews, and to analyse for emergent themes in the creation of discourses. Other benefits of the use of questionnaire, include reduced anxiety for the participant with greater

confidence in response confidentiality due to the interviewer's absence, more opportunity to contact a larger number of respondents and no requirement to set up a mutually agreeable contact time to complete the set questions (Burns, 2000). However, disadvantages of the use of a questionnaire can include a lowered response rate, particularly if the respondent does not understand the question, poor quality or missing responses perhaps due to the respondent suffering questionnaire fatigue. Incomplete or unreturned questionnaires cannot always be followed up, unless the respondent's name and school or email are provided. Further, the expression or quality of responses from the respondent are dependent on the question design (Burns, 2000). The researcher must therefore ensure that the questions are clearly phrased and easy to follow for the respondent. One questionnaire tool used in the questionnaire of this research, was the Likert scale (Likert, 1932).

The Likert scale was produced as a survey mechanism to gauge interest and opinion of respondents. The Likert scale (Likert, 1932) was used in the questionnaire to gauge opinion of the *AC: E* from the research participants. The opinion scale gives the respondent an opportunity to select the best fit of agreement with a statement. Normally, a numerical scale is awarded to Likert Scale responses. However, for this research project the Likert Scale responses show a general or guiding opinion of agreement from the participants about relevant statements regarding the implementation of the *AC: E*. A benefit of the Likert scale (Likert, 1932) is that it enables the respondent to focus on a statement and then judge their position according to their belief and experience. Use of the scale allowed the researcher to quickly align the teacher participants' responses for particular questions. Aligning participant responses through use of a Likert Scale, creates greater data reliability (Burns, 2000). Additionally, this survey tool facilitates reading clarity of participant responses, which enables faster analysis and direction for possible follow-up, including in an interview.

### 3.5.3 Interviews

Interviews have the potential to provide rich, useful, and “important sources of case study evidence” (Yin, 2014, p. 110) about the people and places from which they are recorded. This data source provides detail, insight and identification of other possible data source leads for the researcher to follow.

The purpose of an interview in this case study, is to validate participant responses that have been recorded (Burns, 2000), such as those found in the questionnaire, and with accuracy through the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) processes. Benefits of the use of an interview as a data collecting instrument, include: a higher response rate from interviewees, which is good for smaller sample sizes such as in this research project; the opportunity to have questions clarified in person, which contributes to the higher response rate; and possible record of extensive data including the opportunity to observe spoken delivery nuances (Charmaz, 2006). The richest interviews typically consist of open-ended, semi-structured or facilitative questions (Burns, 2000).

Open-ended, semi-structured, facilitative questions are those, which allow the respondent to expand their answers, as they feel appropriate. These questions provide scope for revealing emergent themes for discourse analysis, by eliciting a dialogue about a topic or issue that the interviewee would otherwise or could not expand on in a questionnaire or survey.

Conversely, interviews can be problematic. Some issues of interview as a data source may include: a limited number of respondents, expense or difficulty in setting up interview times, the interviewer’s presence may interfere with the interviewee’s rapport and responses, which may affect the research validity and reliability, increased anxiety for the interviewee who may feel placed “on the spot” (Burns, 2000, p. 583); and the possibility that the flexibility of open-ended questions may create unrelated responses that are difficult to categorise and evaluate (Burns, 2000). Use of “shorter case study interviews” (Yin, 2014, p.

111) was suitable for this research project, since the time availability of the research participants' time, was limited.

#### **3.5.4 Extant texts**

Extant texts or documents are “the fabric of our world” (Love, 2003, p. 83); rich and pertinent sources of data that formally note and record the information from a particular time or event. These texts are of particular importance during times of change, they are a permanent source of data that can be referred to at any time (Chafouleas, Riley-Tillman, & Sugai, 2007). Document analysis allows the researcher to “corroborate evidence from other sources” (Burns, 2000, p. 467). The extant text data are not new, but are already part of the research site, which allows for authenticity and transparency.

Extant texts are pre-existing texts from information repositories such as online sector based and unrestricted public sites, but also include relevant brochures, emails, Internet resources, reports, and books. Extant texts “corroborate and augment evidence from other sources” (Yin, 2014, p. 107). Extant texts assist in the provision of context and allow the researcher to create a line of inquiry including the types of questions that could be asked in surveys, questionnaires and interviews. This type of data serves as a reference point in a chain of data sources. A point of interest within a document can be followed up by the researcher with a survey question and then as a topic of discussion in an individual interview schedule. For example, and in this research, analysis of pre-existing extant texts within the school site enabled the researcher to gauge the types of information being distributed to the English teachers and how each of these teachers may have perceived the impact of the processes used in the implementation of the *AC: E*. As the extant texts are not affected nor influenced by the researcher, the justification for use of this data source is found in the ability

to confirm or deny ideas located in the coding analysis of questionnaire or interview transcript data.

The researcher collated 112 documents, including *Australian Curriculum* (ACARA) documents that were distributed to teachers, or which teachers were encouraged by superordinate stakeholders to access online. These documents include *Australian Curriculum* related brochures, school website information about the *Australian Curriculum*, and staff newsletters detailing curriculum associated requirements and information. Schools produce a large amount of documents, from collegial emails to curriculum manuals. It is noted by the researcher that it was almost impossible to access all curriculum documents, due to lack of researcher access for privacy or ownership reasons. Therefore, only those texts accessible to the researcher, were considered for this data source. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) outline three suggested categories for extant text types. These categories are personal, official and popular culture documents.

Personal texts are those created by an individual participant, which may include collegial emails, professional journal entries, or teaching staff newsletter article. Official documents are created and published by organisations or institutions for internal and external dissemination, for example, informative school newsletters, staff calendars, school webpages, or English faculty meeting minutes. Popular culture documents would include advertisements or promotional materials such as online ACARA videos, which are available to the wider community.

For the purpose of the analysis of extant texts in this research project, data can be approached in several ways. One method is to detail the document type, the level of formality or superordinate direction within the document, if any, and the complexity of the document (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). For the researcher to gain an appreciation of the content of the extant texts, contextual positioning questions created by Ralph, Birks, and Chapman (2014) were adapted for this

research to establish the purpose and benefit, relevant professional value considered as useful for teachers. Contextual positioning allows for reflexive consideration of the extant texts as data to assist in the analysis of other data sources whilst enriching the data analysis process (Bowen, 2009; Charmaz, 2006; Symon & Cassell, 2012).

Extant texts provide evidence as to how teachers may encounter professional development for their understanding of the *Australian Curriculum*. Further, these extant texts guide the researcher in the construction of questions for questionnaires and interviews. Whilst the extant texts are important, they do not sit in a hierarchical data order. The extant texts inform the data collection and analysis process. That is, in light of triangulation (Charmaz, 2013) multiple data sources provide reference, correlation and elucidation in analysing data for inference (Burns, 2000; Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

According to Rossett (1987), extant data reveals the relationship between the superordinate and subordinate stakeholders. It also helps to analyse what was or is happening in an ongoing situation, such as curriculum reform and implementation (Altrichter, 2005). This type of data allows extrapolation of ideas or key issues that affect the research site or question. For an education or school-based research site, extant texts establish a reference point for teacher responses to an event or situation such as curriculum or policy reform. However, it is important for these extant documents to be used in conjunction with data found from other sources such as interviews and questionnaires, to draw and construct reliable inferences. That is, extant texts complement other data sources by providing a solid or transparent data base, adding depth and reason for the types of responses retrieved from questionnaires or interviews by the researcher. This data source allows the researcher to find insight otherwise not found in other data types. Questions, actions and themes therefore follow, providing a legitimate research direction guided by the data.

The value of extant texts as data is in their ability to help establish questions to seek background reason for consequential responses and behaviours. It is best to “[u]se extant data analysis to go back and find out if they do, in fact, know how to explain the account” (Rossett, 1987, p. 52). Extant text data allows verification for particular aspects or ideas found in the research project’s other data sources. Extant texts that may be considered for this data category comprise any existing disseminated documents that are relevant to the topic being examined.

### **3.5.5 Delivery of research instruments**

Schools from which teachers showed interest in participating in this research project, were delivered a research study pack, which included the information, consent and questionnaire documents. This was sent either in hardcopy format through the postal system, or electronically via email, dependent on the English Head of Department’s preference. These English Heads of Department disseminated copies of the research study pack to their English teaching colleagues. The participation of individual teachers was completely voluntary. The final question of the questionnaire was an invitation for those participating to take up the offer of meeting with the researcher to arrange a follow-up interview. All participants were assured of their anonymity in the researcher’s transcription of the interviews and presentation in the thesis. The interview participants were provided a copy of their transcript for perusal, correction, or censoring. Further, participants were given the assurance that they could retract any unprocessed data upon request. No participants of this research queried, corrected, or retracted any of their data. The data instruments for this research project are found in Appendix B of this thesis.

### 3.5.6 Research Limitations

All research projects face limitations (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) or obstacles that may hinder data collection or analysis. The limitations of this research, included extensively delayed ethics approval, participant availability and interview time synchronisation, questionnaire return time from participants and the delays in document release from official stakeholders such as ACARA and Tasmanian education sector stakeholders, and participant response transparency.

Participant availability and interview time synchronisation was an unavoidable limitation of this project. Participant availability reduced the number of participants for the project, and for the opportunity for collection of interview data.

The delay of document release from official document repositories slowed the data collection and analysis processes. The delay of document release could not be mitigated by the researcher.

Research participant transparency was a possible factor considered by the researcher. The teachers volunteered their participation, indicating their self-selection for and confidence to contribute to this study. This may have provoked the participation of teachers who held roles of internal superordinate responsibility, such as the leaders or heads of the English faculties. This may mean that possibly submissive, or, teachers with heavy workloads, were not included in the research. Participants' self-selection was an unavoidable issue for the researcher. This project invited teachers rather than enforced participation, which allowed for interested and available teachers to speak of their experience with the AC: E reform. These limitations are recognised by the researcher as influencing the creation of less generalisable findings, but that the limitations do not detract from the importance of the case study research for the Tasmanian teachers' experience of national education reform.



### **3.6 Data Analysis**

This section presents the analytical framework and theoretical approaches to data analysis for this research. The analytical processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013b; Weedon, 1987) are discussed, informed by a poststructural feminist theory (Foucault, 2003; Lather, 1991). These processes are used to analyse data in the proceeding constructivist grounded theory coding and critical discourse analysis.

#### **3.6.1 Constructivist Grounded Theory**

Constructivist grounded theory is the process in which theories are produced through inductive reasoning and are “abstracted from time and place” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 133). Inductive or logical inference is the consideration of multiple explanations, “forming hypotheses for each possible explanation, checking them empirically by examining data, and pursuing the most plausible explanation” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 104). This induction or theorising begins as soon as the research is initiated in order to construct and reconstruct lines of inquiry. Initial findings create trajectories of ideas and questions that inform the direction and findings of the project. Collected qualitative data informs the research, allowing the creation of theories that can be examined in critical discourse or applied thematic analysis (Charmaz, 2001).

Constructivist grounded theory methodology assists in “conducting qualitative research that focuses on creating conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive analysis from the data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 187). This methodology allows theory to be “developed from data in an iterative or recursive and evolving process” (Ong, 2012, p. 2) by the researcher. Findings of qualitative studies emerge from organised and reorganised analytic categories from within the accessible collected data through thematic analysis. This approach does not

proceed through predetermined, quantitative, or subjective extant theoretical production (Burns, 2000; Charmaz, 2006).

Thematic analysis is used to synthesise and provide rich descriptions of data, which enables an event or phenomenon to be given consideration according to the intricate observations made by the researcher during analysis (Guest, MacQueen, & Namey, 2012). It is a method in which language in the data can be coded or grouped and reorganised into categories by the researcher, based on a theme, idea or nuance otherwise not explicitly detailed within the data (Boyatzis, 1998; Weedon, 1987). This allows the data to be re-opened and exposed to, or informed by, other ideas or themes within the collected data to help explicate and connect issues and events. This assists the researcher in collating evidence for issues identified by the researcher in the ensuing discourse analysis.

Constructivist grounded theory is a detailed data analysis process, which:

assumes an obdurate, yet ever-changing world but recognizes diverse local worlds and multiple realities, and addresses how people's actions affect their local and larger worlds. [...] [A] Constructivist approach aim[s] to show the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions. (Charmaz, 2006, p. 132)

The constructivist grounded theory approach assists in the interpretation of the effect of implementation of the *AC: E* for secondary English teachers in Tasmania, by positioning the researcher as an observer of individual participants in a larger group, some of the English teaching staff at seven secondary schools in the south east of Tasmania, from the three Tasmanian education sectors.

Charmaz (2006) notes three main phases of coding, which identify ideas, to employ constructivist grounded theory in order to classify the ideas with codes, categories or themes, and discourses. These three phases used to construct

discourses, require the constructivist grounded theory coding processes of initial coding, focused or selective coding, and axial coding for the discovery of themes.

Charmaz (2006) argues that constructivist grounded theory enables a rigorous data analysis approach by looking further into the research participants' construction or perspectives of their realities through the thorough analysis of data involving preliminary, selective or initial, focused, and axial coding phases (section 3.6.1.1), which allows for data saturation or repeated location of ideas with rich, infinitesimal qualitative detail to be found in "interpretative understanding of subjects' meanings" (Charmaz, 2003, p. 250). This is achievable by ensuring data saturation and discourse analysis of the data.

The stages of constructivist grounded theory were employed by the researcher within a qualitative poststructural feminist paradigm, allowing for rigorous process enabling a strengthened discursive analysis of teacher perspectives, which explores the hegemonic issues that impact teacher practice.

### ***3.6.1.1 Constructivist grounded theory coding phases***

The three sequential phases of constructivist grounded theory used in the analysis of the data of this research, include initial coding, focused coding, and axial coding. The codes were created and applied to the data, by the researcher.

#### ***Phase 1 – Open, initial coding***

Open or initial coding, is the first phase of data review in the constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006). This is an important inductive phase. Initial coding is a process which allows the researcher to read and interrogate the data, discovering and identifying the codes relevant to the study. This produces the initial codes.

Initial coding aids the analysis process by satisfying the fit and relevance criteria of grounded theory. In grounded theory, fit refers to how the study meets the empirical requirements of developing codes that confirm the participants' or researcher's experience. Empirical confirmation through open coding bolsters methodological rigour (Bendassolli, 2013). Relevance is where the analysis describes with transparency, what is happening in the data and provides links between "implicit processes and structures" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54).

Close and repeated reading of collected data to construct initial codes creates a thorough understanding of the data for the researcher, with the context and position of participant data (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001) as complex.

The act of assigning codes in this stage of data analysis involves one of four methods: word-by-word, line-by-line, incident-by-incident, or segment-by-segment. As each method suggests, data are coded word-by-word, line-by-line, incident-by-incident, segment-by-segment, or, by larger data portions such as phrases or paragraphs, in detail. According to Charmaz (2006), the most common methods for the initial coding stage, is by using word and line level coding. At word level, pertinent, high-value words for the researcher are recognised and coded. Semantics and semiotics are used to analyse multiple meanings. Line-by-line coding is the identification of a phrase or group of words that can be summarised to form a particular code. These approaches allow the researcher to become immersed and more efficient in the data analysis process (Charmaz, 2013).

Incident-by-incident level coding is summary of notable occurrences or events within the data, and is particularly relevant for interview transcripts (Charmaz, 2006, 2013). Chunks of data are coded segment-by-segment, allowing faster coding and analysis of incidents or themes to be highlighted and named or confirmed reflexively by the researcher. These initial "temporary labels" or codes

are then “densified” (Denzin, Salvo, & Washington, 2008, p. 163) or collapsed in the next stage of coding. This constructivist grounded theory coding practice has been applied in this research study to questionnaire responses and the interview transcript data.

### *Phase 2 – Focused or Selective coding*

The second phase of coding for qualitative constructivist grounded theory analysis (Charmaz, 2006), is the creation of focused or selective categories. Focused or selective categories are a condensed and refined set of codes, which identify emergent occurrences in the data. This phase is carried out by combining similar initial codes through relating, restructuring and rebuilding the data into various groups to expose links and relationships. Focused or selective coding is “the identification of a core category or story around which analysis focuses” (Ezzy, 2002, p. 92). These focused or selective categories inform the production of the axial codes and then dominant discourses, which summarise the findings of this research. This phase gives “coherence to the emerging analysis” (Charmaz, 2006, p.60) of this research.

### *Phase 3 – Axial coding (for thematic analysis)*

Axial coding is the next phase of collapsing data into more manageable codes. Similar ideas found in the previous focused/selective phase, are further collapsed into axial categories and considered for their collective meaning (Foucault, 1972). Memo writing of definitions and connections between categories allow similarities to be identified by the researcher, from which meanings are made and discourses can be formed (Charmaz, 2000, 2006). The axial codes are regrouped by the researcher, to construct dominant themes.

The use of constructivist grounded theory enables inductive or cogent reasoning through the researcher's interpretation or reflexive descriptions of the identified codes for the following stage of discourse analysis in this research (Burns, 2000; Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 2007, 2012; O'Reilly, 2005), where "knowledge claims [are] set within the conditions of the world [or context] today and in the multiple perspectives of [...] group affiliations" (Creswell, 2007, p. 25), or the studied environment. This enables the studied context to be explored with rigour (Charmaz, 2006, 2013; Hoepfl, 1997).

The coding phases of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) are integral to conducting an applied thematic analysis. Applied thematic analysis is connected to constructivist grounded theory, which uses inductive reasoning and multiple analytic techniques to attempt to explain an event or phenomenon (Charmaz, 2006; Guest et al., 2012). Applied thematic analysis is a flexible approach, which produces dominant themes from the data, which are then explored through a critical discourse analysis.

### **3.6.2 Critical Discourse Analysis**

Critical discourse analysis reconstructs the themes that were produced through the processes of constructivist grounded theory into dominant discourses that were constructed from the themes (Fairclough, 2001a). Critical discourse analysis is informed by poststructural feminist theory which considers the issues and implications of social power imbalances, with the aim of challenging or exploring these (Fairclough, 1985). It "is a precise application of content analysis in a qualitative context" (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 309). The analysis and subsequent discussion are uniquely representative and critical of the studied environment or phenomenon. Critical discourse analysis works "with communication, text, language, talk and conversation, but also with the ways of seeing, categorising

and reacting to the social world in everyday practices” (Sarantakos, 2005, p. 309), therefore allowing the researcher to analyse unaltered or, “naturally occurring” (Lynch, 2002, p. 532) information found in plausible events, which increases the transparency and authenticity of a critical discourse analysis. A critical discourse analysis is a precise “attempt to capture the ways in which such variations occur, and the reasons for these variations” (Sarantakos, 2005, p.309). Critical discourse analysis ensures that the researcher captures detail and otherwise hidden explanation of the research site’s events or issues being explored. Within a critical discourse analysis is the opportunity to view and record the dominant discourses but also to make note of what is hidden or possibly missing from the data or previous discourse. Here, discussion of an event or process can be explored to expose these possible hidden aspects of an issue experienced by the research participants, as found in the data and interpreted by the researcher.

The stages taken to effect a critical discourse analysis, are adapted from those outlined by Fairclough (2001). The critical discourse analysis stages that influence this research, allow the researcher to:

1. Focus upon a social problem, which has a semiotic aspect.
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
  - a. The network of practices it is located within
  - b. The relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
  - c. The discourse (the semiosis itself)
    - Linguistic and semiotic analysis.
3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense ‘needs’ the problem.
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4). (Fairclough, 2001a, p. 125)

This research is influenced by Fairclough's (2001a) critical discourse analysis stages 1, 2, and 3. These stages are not explicitly employed; rather, they inform the analysis process.

Stage 1 recognises that the implementation of the *AC: E* was problematic for teachers. It is the exploration of teacher perspectives through the researcher's interpretation, which addresses the two research aims of this research.

In Stage 2, the researcher uses the research aims to explore the *AC: E* implementation processes, to highlight the issues raised by the research participants. The exploration of dominant discourses allows this through using participants' language from questionnaires or interviews, and extant text data, interpreted by the researcher.

Stage 3 enables the researcher to consider the data to address the research aims in order to create an analysis that challenges "relations of power and domination" (Fairclough, 2001a, p. 126). This aligns with the poststructural feminist theory that informs this research, which positions the researcher as an observer who supports equity in educational change.

Stage 4 identifies and explores the issues in relation to the research participants' position in the *AC: E* reform implementation process, and how detached observers may view these issues. This is where the researcher is able to discuss the problems faced by teachers, which require support.

Stages 4 and 5 allow the researcher to consider the issues raised by the research participants, to draw possible solutions to these issues. The researcher is then able to consider how the research contributes to the area of educational change and what further research may be embarked on.



### **3.7 Summary**

This chapter has described the context and participants involved in this qualitative research, together with the theory and processes of constructivist grounded theory and critical discourse analysis, which are used in the analysis of the data for this research. The results of these coding and processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) are presented in the following chapters of this thesis. In Chapter Four, the data analysis processes are described, with examples, using constructivist grounded theory. Chapter Five explores the discourses in relation to the research aims. Chapter Six concludes this thesis with discussion of the main research findings. It also suggests future research directions, and research contributions to educational change processes and research.

## **4.0 Introduction**

The previous chapter described the methodological theory, approaches, and procedures which inform the selection of the project's data analysis. This chapter describes the data analysis processes used by this research, which uses a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) coding approach. It describes the coding stages, from which the dominant themes are constructed

Four sections of this chapter describe the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) coding process, including Section 4.1 Extant texts and Data Analysis Process, Section 4.2 Preliminary and Initial Coding Phases, Section 4.3 Development of the Categories through focused coding, and then in Section 4.4, themes are developed through the use of axial coding. Section 4.5 explains the analysis and use of the relevant *Australian Curriculum: English (AC: E)* extant texts that were available to the researcher. Chapter Four concludes with a summary of the data analysis in Section 4.6.

Constructivist grounded theory coding processes (Charmaz, 2006) were applied to the questionnaire responses and the interview transcript data, which were collected during 2013 and 2014. Relevant excerpts from the research participants' questionnaire responses and interview transcript data are included to explain the coding processes employed. Extant texts are included to assist in contextualising, validating, unifying, and comparing of teacher participants' perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation in and across participants' schools and sectors (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2003).

Questionnaire and interview data were collected from 12 secondary school English teachers from seven different Hobart and regional schools across the three Tasmanian education sectors, the Tasmanian Government Department of Education (DoE), the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO) and Independent Schools Tasmania (IST), during the implementation of the *Australian Curriculum: English (AC: E)* from 2012 to 2015.

## **4.1 Extant texts and Data Analysis**

### **4.1.1 Extant texts as data support**

Extant texts were collected for consideration of contextual influences on teachers' perspectives of the *AC: E* reform. As detailed in the previous chapter, extant texts are the documents which assist the researcher in understanding contextual influences on participant perspectives (Altrichter, 2005), since the information that supports teachers through reform, shapes perspectives of reform.

The available extant texts were collated by the researcher, with the researcher using a set of contextual positioning questions, adapted from Ralph, Birks and Chapman's (2014) contextual positioning text analysis questions. These questions included those to identify document authorship, who the documents were intended for, and purpose and clarity of the viewed document (see Appendix B.3 for full blank proforma). These questions assisted the researcher to review and consider the documents that were accessible. The questions sought to identify the purpose and quality of *AC: E* texts for classroom teachers, from the researcher's perspective. The collection and consideration of 112 extant texts were carried out using a review proforma for ease of reference for the researcher (see Appendix D.3 for an example review). These extant texts serve as data support and contextual background of participant perspectives, which informed the researcher's interpretation of questionnaire and interview

data. The extant texts served as indicators of *AC: E* resourcing for teachers during the curriculum reform.

Resource availability influences participant perspectives of equitable resource access, and the effectiveness of reform processes and information for teachers. The researcher was permitted brief login access to two of the three Tasmanian education sectors' extant text resource repositories. Table 4.1 below shows the proportion of resources available to each sector, and the number of resources that had restricted access for stakeholders of the three education sectors. There was evidence in the data for a lack of *AC: E* resource support for teacher participants. There was an issue of professional inequity concerning inadequate resource access and needs. These issues are further examined in Chapters Five and Six. The following Table 4.1 illustrates the availability on average of *AC: E* resources to teachers from each sector.

*Table 4.1* – Tabulation of reviewed extant texts

<b>Review of available <i>AC: E</i> extant texts</b>		
<b>Author or source/repository</b>	<b>Extant text count</b>	<b>Percentage (%) of reviewed extant texts</b>
ACARA documents	18	15.2
Australian Federal documents	5	4.5
Tasmanian Government documents	3	2.7
Sector A documents	57 (52 restricted)	50.9
Sector B documents	20 (5 restricted)	17.8
Sector C documents	6	5.3
Professional Association documents	4	3.6
<i>Login only/restricted access documents (documents available only to Sector A &amp; or Sector B)</i>	57	<i>51% of 112 documents</i>
TOTAL	112	

Table 4.1 serves as an example of the number of resources available for teachers via superordinate stakeholders such as ACARA and the three Tasmanian education sectors.

#### 4.1.2 Data Analysis Process

This section outlines the steps taken using a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006, 2013) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001a; Kress, 1985) for authentic analysis of data (Charmaz, 2006, 2013; Hiller, 1998; Kress, 1985). The data analysis process includes the coding of the project's two main data sources, the 12 questionnaires and eight transcribed semi-structured interviews. The data were collected from secondary school English subject teacher research participants from across the three Tasmanian education sectors. The questionnaires and interview transcripts are viewed as the main data sources of this research. They provide rich and open responses from the research participants, to examine teacher perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation.

To analyse the data, the researcher applied four stages of constructivist grounded theory coding (Charmaz, 2006) comprising initial coding, focused coding, and axial coding to then establish dominant themes. The codes are named by the researcher to assist in the researcher's qualitative interpretation of the data. The description and exploration of the codes in this chapter allows the reader to observe the process of the developing ideas that inform emergent theory in the data.

Preliminary coding, informed by the researcher's initial reading of the data, allows the researcher to identify and "coalesce" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 3) or label ideas into initial codes to begin the coding analysis of the research data. Questionnaire responses were the first data of the project to be analysed since they formed the first set of data to be returned to the researcher by the teacher participants. Preliminary coding was used as a precursor to the initial coding phase. This sequence assisted in the researcher's construction of follow-up questions in the semi-structured interviews. The gathering of preliminary codes provided an innovative listing of emergent ideas from the data, as a precursor for

the researcher to construct initial codes which were then also identified in the questionnaire and interview transcript data. Similar initial codes were then collapsed into larger ideas to construct the focused codes to create categories. These category codes were then collapsed according to theoretical, or, thematic patterns by the researcher, to create axial codes which create themes, to be reconstructed into dominant discourses, which were analysed using a critical discourse analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Fairclough, 1985, 2001b, 2013b; Gee, 2011; Lazar, 2005; Wodak, 2009).

The constructivist grounded theory coding process allowed the researcher to move in a reflexive, non-linear manner through the data to identify recurrent or new ideas or issues. Moving between or revisiting data sources with the same codes gave the researcher confirmation of the initial codes that were found, as the coding process enabled the reconstruction and condensing of the codes into larger themes, from preliminary to initial codes, then focused coding for categories, to axial codes, which formulated and verified themes throughout the data (Charmaz, 2006; Saldaña, 2013).

The initial codes from within the data are applied to the data and are constantly revisited, which “leads you from the data to the idea, and from the idea to all the data pertaining to that idea” (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 137). An abbreviated example of the progression of coding from the research data is provided in Table 4.2 (see Appendix C.1 for detailed coding itemisation). Memo writing by the researcher, was used as a supportive data analysis tool, for “jotting in the margins tentative ideas for codes, topics, and noticeable patterns or themes” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 21). It enabled the researcher to draft ideas and clarify coding, “to document and reflect on: [...] coding process and code choices; how the process of inquiry is taking shape; and the emergent patterns, categories and subcategories, themes, and concepts in [...] the] data – all possibly leading toward theory” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 41). Memo writing assisted the researcher in the

construction of the initial codes, categories, and themes of this research, since “all memos are analytic regardless of content” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 42). Table 4.3 provides an example of coding with memo writing against selected codes that were found from within an extract of one of the research’s transcribed semi-structured interviews.

After the coding process of questionnaire and interview data was completed, a total of 122 preliminary codes were reorganised into 51 initial codes. These initial codes were then collapsed into 17 focused codes, collated according to similar concepts, from which seven categories were identified. The seven categories were reconstructed using axial coding, into five emergent themes, which assisted in the researcher’s creation and discussion of the two dominant discourses using a critical discourse analysis in Chapter Five. The extant texts gave contextual evidence to support teacher participant perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation at their schools.

Table 4.3 – Memo example of coding applied to a data extract:

<b>Participant 4: Interview site 3</b>			
<p><b>P4:</b> “I think that it [the AC: E implementation process] was just slow; being given that time from our Principal, to study it as a team, and to do moderation and to look online and see what a ‘C’ [assessment rating] looks like and to see that kind of thing. From that, we sort of developed the scope and sequence and that helped us. Now we do a lot of inner fortnightly meetings and every three weeks we have an English meeting. Then we sort of do a lot of in-school moderating, and we create assessment tasks in both junior school and senior school – so we all have the same task. That’s really good. A lot of time goes into that, because we don’t get any time release for being head of the subject areas – we do in [another Australian state], just saying! We aren’t in [that other state], but just saying!”</p>			
	<b>Initial Coding</b>	<b>Focused Coding</b>	<b>Axial Coding</b>
<b>Code/ID numbers</b>	3, 4, 15, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 43	2, 6, 8, 10, 11, 23	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
	<p><u>Example code: 15</u></p> <p>EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT FROM INTERNAL SUPERORDINATES (IN SECTOR) - USEFUL FOR TEACHERS - CERTAINTY AND SUPPORT</p>	<p><u>Example code: 23</u></p> <p>TEACHER PERCEIVES THAT PRACTICAL NEEDS HAVE BEEN NOTED BY SUPERORDINATES – TRYING TO BE MET</p>	<p><u>Example code: 2</u></p> <p>SYSTEMIC EFFICACY AND CLARITY for REFORM (effectiveness of superordinates, perceived by teachers)</p>
<b>Memo</b>	<p>Teacher (also the English subject leader) notes the frequency of English faculty meetings, which have provided necessary professional development, hinting at need for such and the follow-up through extended and focused professional development. Shows too the lack of AC: E clarity or instruction from external superordinates.</p>	<p>Teacher acknowledges their Principal’s willingness to support staff through some time release, yet there remains time deficit for subject leaders; possible funding deficit for faculty due to lack of time release?</p>	<p>Possible systemic impact upon teachers according to the level of support and clarity of information for curriculum implementation. This code identifies that there are specific aspects within a school site and sector that either impede or facilitate professional practice and growth during reform.</p>

## 4.2 Preliminary and Initial Coding Phases

### 4.2.1 Preliminary coding of questionnaires

The questionnaires were analysed using preliminary coding and initial coding. Preliminary coding is a “provisional [... and] imminently correctable” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 84; 2013) pre-initial coding phase of the constructivist grounded theory coding process. The preliminary coding phase occurred as the



project's data were collected. The preliminary codes were constructed into initial codes.

The questions included in the questionnaire were designed to capture teacher perspectives of the implementation of the *AC: E*. These questions assisted the researcher in the identification of codes in the teacher responses. The lengthy preliminary coding list (see Appendix C.2, Table 4.4) of 122 codes shows that this was a vital step in the collection of points of interest for the researcher, as it allowed a broad view of issues raised by teacher participants. Preliminary codes were identified in, highlighted and iteratively applied to the scanned questionnaire data, using the qualitative data analysis software program NVivo (Qualitative Solutions and Research (QSR), 2012). Each of the 122 preliminary codes were entered into NVivo, which tallied the frequency of these preliminary codes. The constant revisiting between data and coding, allowed the researcher to produce a list of preliminary codes that were then sorted to inform the initial coding phase.

#### **4.2.2 Initial coding**

Initial coding is the first formal step in constructivist grounded theory coding for data analysis (Charmaz, 2006, 2013). The initial codes were applied to each participant questionnaire, and to each teacher participant interview transcript. Using the data analysis software NVivo, the researcher was able to identify, highlight, and tag relevant sections of data, each time that a code was located by the researcher (see Figure 4.1, Appendix C.3.1). NVivo stored the initial code names, frequencies, and locations of codes within the data, which enabled faster search and review functionality compared to traditional hardcopy coding and record-keeping.

A final list of 51 initial codes was identified by the researcher, grouped from the preliminary coding stage according to similarity of concepts. These initial codes identified the participants' perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation

processes in their schools. These initial codes were a platform to establish direction for the focused coding phase. The 51 identified initial codes and their frequencies are listed in Table 4.5 (see Appendix C.3).

Whilst the total initial code count from questionnaire and interview data was high, the variation in code frequencies indicated a range of perspectives and experiences of teachers during the *AC: E* implementation. The most frequent initial codes found in the questionnaire and interview data are indicative of persistent and pertinent issues for Tasmanian secondary English teachers during the *AC: E* reform. The ten most frequently occurring initial codes are listed in Table 4.6.

*Table 4.6 – Ten most frequent questionnaire and interview data initial codes*

<b>Most frequent initial codes from questionnaire and interview data</b>		
Initial code #	Initial Code	Frequency
24	Teacher identifies need for professional learning – focused training – to fill gaps and intensive PD includes mentoring	176
17	Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement AC:E	155
25	Teacher identifies need for professional learning – General training – to fill gaps, includes mentoring	142
22	Teacher perceives that practical needs have not been met - yet to be or not met	138
2	Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for)	123
16	Ineffective management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E	122
43	Teacher feels that the time required for workload has seen a major increase.	119
20	Self-efficacy – Teacher is Working or getting by with basics	119
13	Ineffective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E	109
46	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by external superordinates to implement the AC:E as unreasonable or rushed	101

Table 4.6 shows that the most frequently occurring code was initial code 24, Teacher identifies need for professional learning – focused training – to fill gaps and intensive PD, includes mentoring. Initial code 24 was found in all questionnaire and interview data sources. The high incidence of Initial code 24

illustrates that teacher participants at the time of supplying responses during 2013 and 2014, felt a need for more specific, intensive, and frequently available professional learning and mentoring to assist with the understanding and implementation of the then incoming *AC: E*.

Initial code 25, Teacher identifies need for professional learning – General training – to fill gaps, includes mentoring, mirrors this concept of need for pedagogical content knowledge, professional learning, and mentor support, with the high frequency clearly indicating that teachers wanted and require additional support at a general level, to that already available in their schools and sectors. This initial code 25 was found in all questionnaire responses and in seven of the eight interview transcripts. Initial codes 24 and 25 indicate teachers' desire and need for additional professional pedagogical content knowledge support. Their prevalence shows that at least part of the content of the *AC: E* was unclear to the majority, if not all research participants of this project across all Tasmanian education sectors.

Initial code 16 Ineffective management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of *AC: E*, and initial code 17 Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement *AC: E*, were found in all questionnaire data sources and in four and six of the eight interview transcripts respectively. These codes represent a level of discontent and a view by teacher participants that the management of the implementation of the *AC: E* by external, out of education sector, and internal, in education sector, superordinates; was not meeting the expectations of these teacher participants.

Initial code 46 Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by external superordinates to implement the *AC: E* as unreasonable or rushed, was found in all questionnaires and through six of the eight interview transcripts. This adds weight to and connects with initial code 43, Teacher feels that the time required

for workload has seen a major increase, which was found in all questionnaires and in seven of the eight interview transcripts. Initial code 46 is a consequence of initial code 43, where an increased workload created a notion of the time needed to accommodate the changed workload for teachers. These interconnected codes show that the participants' perspective of an inadequate implementation timeframe has impacted on their reported noticeable increase in the teaching workload in order to accommodate the *AC: E* implementation.

The six highest frequency initial codes relate to and affect the teachers' sense of self-efficacy through impacting teacher workload and practice. Initial code 20, Self-efficacy – Teacher is Working or getting by with basics, was found in all questionnaire and interview transcript data sources. It shows that teacher participants perceive their professional self-efficacy as working, or only partly working with the demands of the curriculum changes in their practice, with a basic understanding of the *AC: E* content, and the requirements of the *AC: E*.

The difference in coding frequency, between initial code 24 and the remaining initial codes 2, 13, 16, 17, 20, 22, 25, 43, and 46, with the largest difference of 21 counts between initial code 24 and 17, suggests that the most pressing issue for teachers is the need for specific professional learning.

While the most frequent initial codes signpost dominant issues for teachers during curriculum reform, the least frequent initial codes perform as indicators of issues that are either of less concern, or of areas that require attention. For example, if praise for or positive perspectives of implementation management code infrequently, it suggests that teachers are not observing the implementation process as effective, or that the issue is not considered as important by the participants. If a negative or less favourable perspective is infrequently coded, it could suggest that an opposite or positive perspective is occurring in the cohort of participants. Table 4.7 presents the ten least frequent initial codes from across questionnaire and interview transcript data sets.

Contextual or background information codes 5-11 and 50-51 were the lowest frequency codes. These codes were not included in the least frequent list, since they detail teaching role and experience rather than perspectives of reform experience, however, they do inform the researcher's whole view of the data.

*Table 4.7 – Ten least frequent questionnaire and interview data initial codes*

<b>Least frequent initial codes from questionnaire and interview data</b>		
Initial code #	Initial Code	Frequency
37	Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders	6
29 (found in interviews)	Teacher feels unrestricted practise and or revels in professional autonomy	10
36	Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders	11
42	Teacher feels that the time required for workload has had little or no increase	11
27	Teacher feels level of Professionally guided practise from superordinates rather than autonomy	15
39	Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	15
28	Teacher feels restricted practise from superordinates rather than autonomy	17
40	Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	20
41	Teacher perceives that there is no or rigid communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	21
18	Self-efficacy – Teacher feels Confident or able to adjust easily through knowledge and support	21

The low frequency of the codes shown in Table 4.7, reinforces the importance of the occurrence of the more frequent codes. For example, low frequency initial code 42, Teacher feels that the time required for workload has had little or no increase (Table 4.7), reinforces the importance of higher frequency initial code 43, Teacher feels that the time required for workload has seen a major increase (Table 4.6). In this example, the low occurrence of initial code 42, regarding low workload increase, supports the high frequency of initial code 43, asserting that there is a heavier workload for teachers under curriculum reform in Tasmania. The significance of these lower frequency initial codes is that they

indicate the low frequency occurrence of positive perspectives of the *AC: E* and of professional support.

Issues of teacher attitude towards the *AC: E* implementation are found in initial codes 1, Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent of or endures change (could be problematic for professionalism/practise growth), 2, Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for), 3, Positive Collegiality where teachers see the *AC: E* implementation as an opportunity to improve practise, and 4, Positive enhancement where teachers see *AC* as able to improve practise and content. These initial codes provide the teachers' general perspective of the *AC: E* implementation, where teachers saw some positive impact of the implementation on their practise and secondary school English course content through the reform process and by the changed content of the *AC: E*. In contrast, these codes also show that the teachers perceived a number of negative or challenging issues relating to support and practise for working with the *AC: E*.

Initial codes 5, Beginning teacher, 6, Experienced teacher, 7, Full Time, some pressure but good access or awareness, of *AC: E* information, 8, Internal Superordinate, showed that seven teachers identified as superordinate or carrying a level of responsibility, and that codes 9, more roles equals more time pressure, and 10, Part-Time less pressure but less access, indicated that three participants were part-time teachers. Code 11, Subordinate - follows or answers to others, showed that five teachers identified as subordinate or not carrying a level of responsibility. These codes reveal the teaching context or level of professional experience and role, which gives some indication as to the level of teacher agency, and perspective on education reform, such as that of the implementation of the *AC: E*. Initial code 50, Teacher has experienced multiple education reform, showed that eight of 12 teachers had experienced multiple education reforms during their teaching career, and 51, Teacher has experienced zero to few reform,

noted four of 12 teachers had little reform experience. Multiple reform experiences suggest possible reform fatigue and apathy, or, conversely, a capacity for effective reform adaptation. Having few reform experiences could suggest indirect involvement in reform processes or participants holding teaching experience outside of Tasmania prior to implementation of the *Australian Curriculum*.

The remaining initial codes 12, 14, 15, 21, 23, 26, 30-35 and 38 identified issues surrounding information availability and clarity, and professional support for and agency of teachers. Perspectives of these issues differed among participants, however coding found in questionnaire and interview transcript data revealed that these initial codes highlighted areas of concern for Tasmanian teachers. Initial codes 44, 45, 47, 48, and 49 refer to teacher opinions about time availability for teaching workload under the *AC: E*, which highlights a workload during reform that may be distressing or difficult for Tasmanian teachers as they seek to work more proficiently during educational change.

#### **4.2.3 Summary of Initial Codes**

From the 122 preliminary codes of the questionnaire data, which informed the direction of the interview questions, 51 initial codes were found in the questionnaire and interview transcript data. The initial codes indicate a range of issues for Tasmanian English teachers during the implementation of the *AC: E* in 2013 and 2014.

The initial codes were used in the process of focused coding, which is the next phase of data analysis in constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006). From here, initial codes are reconstructed to form larger groupings of teacher perspectives and experiences in the focused coding phase.

### **4.3 Development of Categories**

The focused coding phase in constructivist grounded theory enables the emergence of broader concepts or categories, which assist in the exploration of the research aims. Focused coding is a process in which initial codes are gathered and grouped according to their conceptual similarities. Categories are then constructed into themes.

#### **4.3.1 Focused Coding of Questionnaire and Interview Data**

Focused coding is the second phase for data analysis in constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) after the generation of initial codes. It uses the previous coding to analyse or examine extensive amounts of data, and “requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data incisively and completely” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). Focused coding is a process that reorganises or sorts data into categories to “identify patterns” (Wetherell et al., 2001, p. 39). The focused coding phase collapses initial codes into larger groups according to common ideas or issues, to assist in the development of the categories, which inform the axial or thematic coding phase. These categories found in the questionnaire and interview transcript data resulted from the subsumption of initial codes for “sensitizing concept[s]” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 60) and label phenomena in the data. This phase in the coding analysis requires the researcher to understand the context of the data in order to manipulate and decide on the collapsing, or, grouping of previous codes. This phase identified 17 focused codes, renamed as categories, created from the previous 51 initial codes (see Appendix C.4, Table 4.8), which were then reconstructed into seven categories.



Table 4.9 – Collapsing of focused codes to categories

Focused codes			Categories		
FC#	Focused codes	Questionnaire and interview Code Count	C#	Category	Category count
1	<b>Problematic PERSPECTIVE</b> - Problematic for practise - Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent of or endures change; affected by external factors – Perspective problematic for practise - Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for).	214	1	<b>Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform</b>	319
2	<b>Progressive PERSPECTIVE</b> is affected by external factors - Progressive - Perspective progressive positive Collegiality where teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practise and knowledge.	105			
3	<b>DYNAMIC EFFICACY – External Super</b> - Effective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support; <b>- Internal Super</b> - Effective management from internal superordinates (in sector)	113	2	<b>Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy</b>	588
4	<b>IDLE EFFICACY - External Super</b> - Ineffective or minimal management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC: E, <u>not fully supported to implement AC: E</u> <b>Internal Super</b> - Ineffective or Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC: E; teacher not fully supported.	475			
11	<b>Pragmatic Clarity</b> - External and Internal Effective	102	3	<b>Pragmatic and Recondite clarity</b>	374
12	<b>RECONDITE Clarity</b> - External and Internal Minimal or Reduced	272			
5	<b>BOLSTERED INTRINSIC SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Confident through PD and supports.	21	4	<b>Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy</b>	194
6	<b>NOMINAL SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Reduced or Working (minimal) without supports.	173			
9	<b>MONITORED teacher agency</b> - Professional/guided or Restricted teacher autonomy; Exclusive – control of communication/ teacher agency;	103	5	<b>Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency</b>	139
10	<b>UNRESTRICTED teacher agency</b> –Minimal control of teacher autonomy; Inclusive – little or no control of communication/ teacher agency	36			
7	<b>SATIATED NEEDS</b> - Met - Supported.	39	6	<b>Satiated and Hovering needs</b>	608
8	<b>HOVERING NEEDS</b> - Not met - yet to be or noted Teachers cite need for – Professional support - <b>Focused support</b> – inform via intensive PD; - <b>General and retraining</b> – fill knowledge gaps.	569			
13	<b>Practicable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload – <b>Moderate or Expected</b> - Little no increase	82	7	<b>Practicable and Impracticable workloads and timeframes</b>	477
14	<b>Impracticable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload - <b>Major increase</b>	119			
15	<b>Practicable Timeframe</b> - External and Internal Super – Acceptable or Practicable	131			
16	<b>Impracticable Timeframe</b> - External Super – Unacceptable, insufficient or Impracticable	145			
17	<i>CONTEXT impacts time - Teaching experience</i>	14			
	<i>ROLE - Full Time some pressure but good access or awareness</i>	9			
	<i>ROLE - Internal Superordinate</i>	11			
	<i>ROLE - more roles is more time pressure</i>	6			
	<i>ROLE - PartTime less pressure but less access</i>	4			
	<i>ROLE - Subordinate - follows or answers to others</i>	7			
	<i>Workload – Reform experience/fatigue</i> - Experienced multiple reforms - Experienced few reforms	26		<i>Not included as a theme – context reference</i> <i>CONTEXTUAL facets - PRECIOUS TIME; count 77</i>	

### 4.3.2 Focused coding process

Seventeen focused codes were collapsed into seven categories which represent the emergent themes associated with teacher perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation. These are listed in Table 4.9.

Seven categories were constructed through the analysis of the initial coding of the questionnaire and interview transcript data. The categories identify issues and their effects pertaining to Tasmanian teacher perspectives of the implementation of the *AC: E* during 2013 and 2014. These categories reveal matters of importance for teacher participants surrounding aspects such as superordinate stakeholder efficacy or management of implementation, practical and professional learning needs, time release, and timeframe allowance for implementation. The seven categories inform the axial or thematic coding analysis. The seven categories identified are category 1: Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform, category 2: Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy, category 3: Pragmatic and Recondite clarity, category 4: Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy, category 5: Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency, category 6: Satiated and Hovering needs, and category 7: Practicable and Impracticable workloads and timeframes.

#### **4.3.2.1 Category 1: *Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform***

Category 1: Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform is the reconstruction of focused codes 1, Problematic perspective, and 2, Progressive perspective. This category examines the mixed perspectives of the teacher participants in the *AC: E* implementation.

Focused code 1, Problematic perspective, recognises the less positive perspectives by teacher participants of the *AC: E* implementation. This code grouping comprises initial codes 1, Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent

of or endures change (could be problematic for professionalism/practise growth), and 2, Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for). This focused code occurred with a high frequency, indicating flaws or tensions in the implementation or content of the AC: E. Initial code 1 identifies ambivalence: the teacher's undecided or accepting response to the AC: E reform where the teacher is not convinced of its benefits or the implementation processes used. It highlights unease or uncertainty surrounding the AC: E and implementation processes. Initial code 2 indicates more explicitly the negative or denigrating comments made by the teacher participants about the AC: E. This initial code indicated unrest and confusion through difficult AC: E reform experiences of the teacher participants. Examples of this focused code from the data are shown in Figure 4.2 and an interview excerpt from Participant 2:

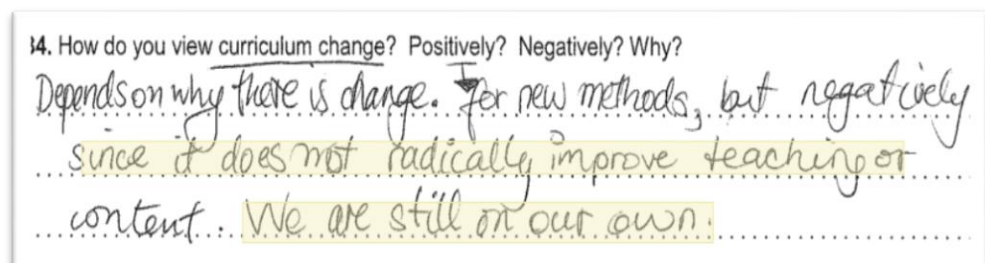


Figure 4.2. Example from questionnaire of a teacher's ambivalent and negative perspectives of the AC: E.

**Participant 2 (P2):** [It's] like we're in primary school, really. It's gone back to a very basic level and not particularly supportive. (Interview)

These two data excerpts exemplify focused code 1 in teacher participant comments that their perspectives of the AC: E depend on the reasons behind the implementation, signifying uncertainty but openness to innovation. These comments also identify negativity through perspectives that the AC: E is not

helpful and that the teacher participants are feeling professionally neglected by their superordinate stakeholders.

Focused code 2, Progressive perspective, deals with the positive perspectives by teacher participants of the *AC: E* implementation. It comprises statements concerning pragmatic or intrinsically beneficial elements in participants' work. This focused code consists of initial codes 3, Positive Collegiality, where teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practice, and 4, Positive enhancement where teachers see AC as able to improve practice and content. Although focused code 2 does not occur with the highest frequency, it does represent a view by teachers that there are effective and advantageous aspects of the *AC: E* and its implementation via superordinate stakeholders.

The two initial codes included in focused code 2 are identified via positive or constructive teacher comments and participants' own judgement of professional practice, pedagogical content knowledge acquisition. The construction of this focused code indicates that teachers see the use for and effective aspects of the *AC: E* reform. Initial code 3, Positive Collegiality where teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practice, looks specifically at positive collegial collaborative impacts through the *AC: E*, which may assist in the enhancement of pedagogical content knowledge, and may also improve student learning through a teacher's active and professional confidence. Similarly, initial code 4, Positive enhancement where teachers see AC as able to improve practice and content, explores teacher acknowledgement of and enthusiasm for improved pedagogical content knowledge through professional learning, advantages for student assessment, and progressive or motivated practice for teachers. Examples of data coded with this focused code, include the following interview transcript data excerpts from Participant 3 and Participant 8:

**P3:** I talk to other teachers – I have got quite a few friends teaching in [other sector] schools - and look to them, asking what do they do and I look at the curriculum and I look at the framework that we have sort of got to work with, and the texts that we have and just sort of use a bit of creativity and like I said, see what the other teachers are doing and get a bit from them (Interview)

**P8:** Some of us are feeling lost, but there is a lot of collegial support, I think. I suppose that there is a lot of freedom with the actual implementation for us in English - as long as we are including the four strands and assessing the work evenly across our classes. We have in-house moderation and meetings when we can. (Interview)

These data excerpts signify participant affirmation of collegial support. This relays a positive perspective of the *AC: E* for professional collaboration, pedagogical content knowledge and practice development and student outcomes, through an improved English curriculum content and scope. This indicates greater cross-sectoral collaboration and improved in-house management for faculty meetings and professional support for teachers. This suggests that teachers see the *AC: E* as an opportunity to develop their pedagogical content knowledge whilst connecting professionally through a unified systemic approach so as to operate effectively under a national curriculum.

This category exemplifies participants' acknowledgement of elements of effective superordinate implementation processes and of the *AC: E* as a catalyst for improved teaching practice.

#### **4.3.2.2 Category 2: *Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy***

Category 2: Dynamic and idle superordinate efficacy is the grouping of focused codes 3, Dynamic efficacy, and 4, Idle efficacy. This category is a grouping of teacher participants' perspectives of the effectiveness of management via internal and external superordinate stakeholders, which included perspectives of feeling supported and confident in the processes of the education reform, or not.

Focused code 3, Dynamic efficacy, identifies references to effective management from external, out of sector, and internal superordinates, denoting appreciation for *AC: E* management processes which instil a sense of assuredness and professional provision of resources for teachers. This focused code suggests that, while positive affirmation is not a focus for teachers, there is a level of appreciation for the implementation work carried out by external and internal superordinate stakeholders. Focused code 3 comprises initial codes 12, Effective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support, and 15, Effective management from internal superordinates (in sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support. These two initial codes identify participant acknowledgement of effective elements of *AC: E* implementation by authoritative stakeholders, dependent on teacher experience or perspective of process clarity. This focused code indicates participant preference for structured implementation including professional learning, as teachers perceive superordinate implementation management to be effective for their needs. Examples of this focused code within questionnaire and interview transcript data from the three Tasmanian education sectors are shown in Figure 4.3 and in the interview excerpts from Participants 5 and 6:

QUESTION		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure (need Qn. clarification)
15	I have had access to useful Australian Curriculum: English professional development.				X		
16	Professional development opportunities are often provided by my school about the Australian Curriculum: English.					X	

Figure 4.3. Example from questionnaire for coding of perspective of effective clarity/support via superordinate stakeholders.

**P5:** Mostly the teaching and learning groups in subject areas have gotten together to compile the syllabus/scope and sequence, and they lay down the framework we will implement within. Pretty good, really. (Interview)

**P6:** In [our] education [system] there are regular opportunities. There are meetings and good access points for all staff, no matter your level of experience or knowledge. The approach is to include and be thorough. (Interview)

Further, focused code 3 highlights effective superordinate management during reform via the provision of clear and pertinent information or documents (see Appendix D.3 for example of an extant text review) for the implementation of the AC: E. Participant 1's interview provided an example of this teacher perspective in saying that, "When the National Curriculum was only just coming out, there was a lot [of resources and support], we had quite a few meetings and there was lots of PD" (Interview). These examples from the data sources indicate a teacher perspective that implementation processes are reasonably effective within their schools, including the usefulness of AC: E implementation professional learning and documentation. In this focused code, teachers seem to present a preference

for support through *AC: E* exemplars and focused and scaffolded phases of implementation, since the teachers indicate that the current resources are “really convoluted” (P5).

Focused code 4, Idle efficacy, was a high occurring code, which identifies teacher participant comments regarding ineffective or unsupportive management from external, out of sector, and internal superordinates. This focused code shows teacher disappointment in *AC: E* management processes, which creates uncertainty, adding to a negative perspective of the *AC: E*. Included in focused code 4 are initial codes 13, Ineffective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of *AC: E*, 14, Minimal management from external superordinates (out of sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement *AC: E*, 16, Ineffective management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of *AC: E*, and 17, Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement *AC: E*. Examples from the data, which illustrate these initial codes, include:

**P6:** I have really had little more formal access to it [the *AC: E*] than can be accessed from ACARA's public portals and *Scootle*. It is frustrating. If they [the government] want teachers to be able to do their jobs properly, especially with the accountability and other red tape then there needs to be far more training and consistent delivery of materials or even methods. Not all teachers are continuously employed. We need to be kept up to date. The curriculum is a national initiative, so why not have a national source of professional learning? We pay our teacher registration, so where is the required and current training for it? (Interview)

**P7:** I wouldn't say orderly. I'd say more managed chaos, or managed dystopia from above for a swag of teachers who are trying to organise



themselves under expectations. You know, ever changing and increasing checklists. Teaching is far more dynamic and changeable than people who don't teach, realise. It's never ending. (Interview)

These interview data excerpts clearly indicate that teacher participants saw ineffective management of the *AC: E* implementation through a frustrating lack of support.

#### **4.3.2.3 Category 3: *Pragmatic and Recondite clarity of resources***

The third category, Pragmatic and Recondite clarity of resources, refers to teacher participant perspectives of the clarity or access to *AC: E* information for their practice. It is a reconstruction of focused codes 11 and 12.

Focused code 11, Pragmatic clarity, indicates that teacher participants perceived good access to user-friendly and effective *AC: E* documents or information. Although this was an infrequent code, it is important as it indicated inadequate access to useful *AC: E* documents for some teachers. Focused code 11 consists of initial codes 30, Teacher feels up-to-date through clarity of information via effective external superordinate docs/stakeholders, and 33, Teacher feels up-to-date through clarity of information via effective internal superordinate doc[ument]s/stakeholders. These initial codes refer to teacher participants feeling supported by way of useful and accessible *AC: E* documents. Examples of focused code 11 include interview transcript excerpts from Participant 5 and Participant 7:

**P5:** Head of Learning and Teaching 'L&T' is the one who kind of gives us directions to Faculty Heads and then they pass that on to the faculties, etc. And then it is reinforced as well, at staff meetings. There was PD but we need more, on kind of deconstructing the strands, and especially when it comes to English – we find it really convoluted.

**P7:** The expectations are there, so, so should the help be. We have a great team, though. No denying that. So yes, we have an effective team from top to bottom, with an interesting makeup of teachers with varying skills and knowledge. This is great, but we need that access point and time. (Interview)

These interview data excerpts indicate that the teacher participants thought that their internal superordinate stakeholders supported them with information and good collegial support, which in turn, facilitated access to useful *AC: E* information.

Focused code 12, *Recondite clarity*, points to teacher perspectives of minimal or reduced clarity of *AC: E* documents or information. This focused code relays participant focus on superordinate or authoritative stakeholder capacity to disseminate information that is straightforward and informative. Focused code 12 was a frequent grouping of initial codes 31, Teacher feels somewhat up-to-date through clarity of information via minimal external superordinate docs/stakeholders, 32, Teacher feels that there is little or reduced clarity of information via external superordinate docs/stakeholders, where information provided is not helpful for teachers, 34, Teacher feels somewhat up-to-date through clarity of information via minimal internal superordinate docs/stakeholders, and 35, Teacher feels that there is little or reduced clarity of information via internal superordinate docs/stakeholders. The notable appearance of this focused code illustrates teacher concern for lack of *AC: E* implementation transparency in documents and directives. Examples from the data that display focused code 12 are shown in Figure 4.4, and an interview data excerpt from Participant 5:

English Professional development type	Main provider (e.g. Department of Education, University, Private sector/consultant, local authority staff, colleagues, etc.)	Main focus of the professional development session	Value of session as teacher 4 – very valuable 3 – valuable 2 – little value 1 – no value	Impact of session on your practise 4 – large impact 3 – some impact 2 – little impact 1 – no impact
Teaching and learning methods		Pedagogy / Philosophy	3	2
English subject knowledge				
Curriculum/ syllabus and development planning		How to be a 'creator/craftsman' of program	2	2

Figure 4.4. Example from questionnaire of coding for Recondite clarity – ‘little value/impact’ indicates here that teacher perceives superordinate stakeholder AC: E information as ambiguous or redundant for their needs.

**P5:** I don’t know if it is just me, but so much of the language, the way... it just seems a little bit repetitive. The point that so much of this has overlapped, it would make sense that if they made the decision or just only assess it or only have that sub-strand in Literacy and take it out of Language. Just to make it a bit easier for the planning side of it.  
(Interview)

The importance of this category is in the teachers’ identification of levels of clarity in documents or information for teachers, which impact teacher ability to understand requirements of the AC: E and their own perceived self-efficacy to adhere to and practise such.

#### 4.3.2.4 Category 4: *Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy*

Category 4: Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy looks at the teachers’ perspectives of their self-efficacy as bolstered or impacted by the level of support offered such as professional development for their practice. Although the

numbers were small in this category, it was important to gauge the level of support for teachers in Tasmania during reform. Category 4 is a reconstruction of focused codes 5, Bolstered intrinsic self-efficacy, where teachers feel supported which promotes a sense self-efficacy, and 6, Nominal self-efficacy, where teachers do not feel adequately supported, which devalues and diminishes their sense of self-efficacy.

Focused code 5 was one of the least frequent focused codes, but indicated that teacher participants felt that they could practise under the *AC: E* implementation without large impact on their perspective of their self-efficacy, showing too, that there were good supports for teacher participants. Focused code 5 consists solely of initial code 18, Self-efficacy – Teacher feels confident or able to adjust easily through knowledge and support. Initial code 18 highlighted teachers' perspective of their self-efficacy as functional or capable and confident or productive, owing to useful supports for their practice.

Perspectives of having only sufficient self-efficacy to manage their practice to “get by” during reform, were grouped into focused code 6, Nominal self-efficacy. These perspectives were influenced by many contextual elements, particular to the participants' experiences. The data indicated that teachers were not feeling overly confident, but were coping, or at times had reduced professional capacity during the *AC: E* implementation. This focused code consists of initial codes 19, Self-efficacy – Teacher feels confidence is reduced or not feeling confident, and 20, Self-efficacy – Teacher is working or getting by with basics. Nominal self-efficacy for the participants reflects perspectives of their ability to cope or work under the demands of the *AC: E*. Here, the data indicates teacher concern for their understanding the content of the *AC: E* and that they perceived this as a disservice to their profession by way of not mastering *AC: E* content for delivery to their students.

Examples of coding that created this category include participants' perspectives of ability to practise without being impeded by the need for exhaustive amounts of professional learning. Data examples that illustrate this category include interview transcript excerpts from Participant 5 and Participant 2:

**P5:** When it comes to teaching the staff to do it, they struggle to be able to do that side of it, doing the actual outcomes and, well, they can usually come up with, you know, some learning and teaching sequences to a degree, but then, the outcomes part is always the really challenging thing.  
(Interview)

**P2:** What I see is that the actual English curriculum itself, there is just so much in there. There's just so much in there. It just goes on infinitum. I don't know if it makes any sense – it just complicates everything. It actually does not simplify it. You cannot cover the complete curriculum.  
(Interview)

The above examples support the category that identified teacher perspectives of their familiarity with the *AC: E* and their ability to barely “cover” or meet the requirements of the *AC: E*. Whilst some newer teacher participants admitted to not wanting to seek internal collegial assistance to address their professional needs out of fear of risking their roles, other teachers demonstrated a dismissive attitude towards trying to incorporate the perceived overwhelming content of the *AC: E*; settling instead to cover the essential aspects and work towards comprehensive use of the *AC: E* by way of realistic and gradual professional growth. This category indicates participants' concerns surrounding equitable need for greater access to *AC: E* materials in order to practise efficaciously.

#### **4.3.2.5 Category 5: Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency**

Category 5: Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency, is a construction of focused codes 9, Monitored teacher agency, and 10, Unrestricted teacher agency. This category refers to teacher perspectives of the level of control that their superordinates held over their teaching autonomy during the curriculum reform.

Focused code 9, Monitored teacher agency, shows teacher participant perspectives of feeling restricted in their teaching practice in regard to teacher activity such as selection of course content, revealing a negative perspective of the *AC: E* implementation. This is an important grouping of initial codes 27, Teacher feels level of professionally guided practice from superordinates rather than autonomy, 28, Teacher feels restricted practice from superordinates rather than autonomy, 36, Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders, 38, Teacher perceives that there is no or rigid communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders, 39, Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders, and 41, Teacher perceives that there is no or rigid communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders. These initial codes refer to teacher perspectives of partial or substantial interference or influence of superordinate stakeholders in teacher practice. This indicates hegemonic tension, and the control and lack of trust in teacher agency by superordinate stakeholders. Two examples of this from the data include interview transcript excerpts from Participant 2 and Participant 3:

**P2:** It was just a directive that was given – this is what it is. So that makes it really very hard. There’s a lot of tension. (Interview)

**P3:** Job security and job performance – everybody has been heightened [work stress] because of this accountability. (Interview)

These two interview data excerpts indicate teacher participant concern for lack of teacher agency through superordinate stakeholder control of practice through accountabilities and rigid direction.

Focused code 10, Unrestricted teacher agency, is a significant though smaller category, which denotes teacher perspectives of an autonomous level of professional freedom or teacher agency. This focused code presents teacher participants' perceived flexibility in their practice, which befits a positive and confident view of professional self and the *AC: E* reform. Focused code 10 combines three initial codes 29, Teacher feels unrestricted practise and/or revels in professional autonomy, 37, Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders, and 40, Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders. The relatively small scale of this category indicates that teachers perceive hegemonic issues with teacher agency or ability to direct their interpretation of the *AC: E* within their classrooms. Examples from questionnaire and interview transcript data relating to this positive category concerning perspectives of professional inclusivity and respect for teacher agency include Figure 4.5 and interview transcript excerpts from Participants 1, 4, and 6:

QUESTION Response: Please mark the corresponding box with an 'X'.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure (need Qn. clarification)
26	As a Tasmanian English teacher my voice is heard by superordinate stakeholders (school management, the government, etc.).				X		
27	The teacher's voice is respected and acted on in decision-making/reform periods in general.				X		
28	I was consulted effectively about the Australian Curriculum: English.			X			

Figure 4.5. Example of coding for Unrestricted teacher agency

**P1:** There's just an expectation that we are professionals and we will do our job in that regard. (Interview)

**P4:** I feel that we still have a lot of freedom. (Interview)

**P6:** [There is] good teacher input into the process. (Interview)

These examples from the data show that teachers perceive a sense of some professional freedom in their practice. This category emphasises teacher need to feel supported through superordinate stakeholder respect for their practice and opinion of education reform.

#### **4.3.2.6 Category 6: *Satiated and Hovering needs***

Category 6: Satiated and Hovering professional needs for reform, denotes whether or not teacher participants felt that they had been supported by way of professional learning to facilitate their practice using the AC: *E*. This category highlights that some professional needs were met, but teacher participants noted more often that they required an increase in professional assistance. Category 6 comprises focused codes 7, Satiated needs, in which teachers perceived that they were being professionally supported, and 8, Hovering needs, where teacher participants felt that they needed general or focused professional support.

Focused code 7, Satiated needs, arose less often than focused code 8. It showed that teachers were less likely to be receiving appropriate professional learning or other pragmatic support such as time release. This focused code included the use of initial code 21, Teacher perceives that practical needs have been met – Supported. A transcript excerpt example of this focused code includes: “In [one sector of] education there are regular opportunities [for teachers to access professional learning and support]. There are meetings and good access points for all staff, no matter your level of experience or knowledge. The approach is to include and be thorough” (P8).



Focused code 8, Hovering needs, acknowledges that there were pragmatic and professional needs of English teachers in Tasmanian secondary schools that have not been met, that would otherwise better support teachers during reform. Initial codes 22, Teacher perceives that practical needs have not been met - yet to be or not met, 23, Teacher perceives that practical needs have been noted by superordinates – trying to be met, 24, Teacher identifies need for professional learning – focused training – to fill gaps and intensive PD [professional development], 25, Teacher identifies need for professional learning – General training – to fill gaps includes [professional/collegial] mentoring, and 26, Teacher identifies need for professional learning – Retraining – mostly able includes [professional/collegial] mentoring, were merged for this category since they indicate teacher need. These initial codes were located throughout questionnaire and interview transcript data from the three Tasmanian education sectors and formed a significant category. All participants clearly indicated that there is need for a range of additional support to assist them through understanding, implementing and maintaining the use of the AC: *E*.

The Hovering Needs focused code, was constructed through teacher identification of the need for additional focused and general support for teachers via professional learning and or mentoring, and focused or specific support was coded through the identification of need for intensive professional learning such as for AC: *E* content, grammar and or rubric construction and assessment. Examples of this coding are shown in Figure 4.6, and in the interview transcript excerpts from Participant1 and Participant 2:

38. What do you see as the top three key professional development needs surrounding curriculum change?  
What specific type of activities would be necessary to effectively address these needs?

- Need: ... Staff knowledge and confidence ...  
Addressed by: ... PD (of which there has been almost none) ...
- Need: ... Time off class for staff to absorb change ...  
Addressed by: ... Government funding ...
- Need: ... Clear reporting / assessment processes ...  
Addressed by: ... PD for staff / time for collegial decision making ...

Figure 4.6. Example of coding from questionnaire, for coding of Hovering needs – teacher identifies need for focused and general support through professional development and [professional/collegial] mentoring confidence.

**P1:** So, how it's [implementation support] meant to happen? That was how it was meant to happen and how it actually happens, no. There isn't anybody who has [pause] nobody is there to help with or figure out the curriculum, yeah... driven that [implementation process], other than we've got at this point in time writing scope and sequences, i.e. the *Australian Curriculum* way, as opposed to the way that we have done that [support] traditionally. (Interview)

**P2:** We just touched on that [AC: E content information for teachers], and then we go and touch on something else and then something else. So we've touched on curriculum documents and what a scope and sequence is meant to be. So we are stuck at 'what is a scope and sequence'. (Interview)

Need for general or basic support was found by way of teacher acknowledgement of need for some training or assistance in less dense or intense aspects of the AC: E, such as preparatory aspects including text selection and

adaptation or assessment moderation. The need for general support or help, also included teacher participant acknowledgement of the need for a teacher mentor to guide and review their *AC: E* planning in a confidential, professionally non-judgemental manner. The need for general support indicates that there was at least some help available for teachers. Examples of teacher identification for general support include the following interview data excerpts:

**P3:** There is nobody to help you. It's so disjointed with our requirements.

**P8:** I would like to know though, how teachers are going to be helped to align their planning with the new curriculum. We need to have consistent and scaffolded professional learning, I think. I would like to know how teachers are going to maintain their professional knowledge without sufficient support, as it stands. (Interview)

Category 6 exemplifies aspects of the *AC: E* that are either unclear or unsupported for teachers in Tasmanian secondary schools. It also signposts disadvantage for teachers who lack detailed *AC: E* knowledge, suggesting superordinate stakeholder inefficiencies and a spectrum of perceived reduced teacher self-efficacy. This is a vital category, which indicates a hegemonic discord whereby differing levels of support for teachers impacts teacher practice.

#### **4.3.2.7 Category 7: *Practicable and Impracticable workloads and timeframes***

Category 7: Practicable and Impracticable workloads and timeframes relate to teacher perspectives of whether their teaching workloads have increased and if the time or timeframe available is adequate for dealing with the introduction of the *AC: E*. This category includes focused codes 13, practicable workload, 14, impracticable workload, 15, practicable timeframe, 16, impracticable timeframe, and 17, context impacts. Focused codes 13-16 indicate

that teacher participants perceive sufficient or insufficient time availability to facilitate planning their teaching work for the *AC: E*. These codes also indicated where time was insufficient or if the workload was impracticable, or that the teacher participant had or was experiencing workload stress. Focused code 13 will be explained as an example for this category.

Focused code 13, Practicable workload, notes teachers' perspectives of an expected, small, or moderate increase in their teaching workload during the *AC: E* implementation. This focused code consists of two initial codes 42, Teacher feels that the time required for workload has had little or no increase, and 44, Teacher feels that the time required for workload has seen some increase. All 12 participants noted little to moderate workload increase in some aspects of the *AC: E* implementation. This suggests that there may be reasonable *AC: E* implementation processes at their respective school sites in order to achieve this.

As the name of this category suggests, teacher responses indicated that they felt that the workload at times was reasonable and achievable. Examples of this category from the questionnaire and interview transcript data are shown in Figure 4.7, and an interview transcript excerpts from Participant 5:

QUESTION		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure (need Qn. clarification)
25	I feel under pressure during education reform/curriculum change.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Figure 4.7. Example of coding for 'Practicable workload' – teacher perceives some pressure to work under a new curriculum.

**P5:** It [working with the *AC: E*] is just a bit time consuming. Other than that, obviously a lot easier than having a syllabus that's in front of you and having to go through it and find bits and pieces. Use CTRL+F. Then you can kind of click and choose the focus, like the grade seven, the literacy strand and you can do that which is handy. Then you could trace

the literacy back through the other subjects as well, which is helpful.

(Interview)

These examples show that participants see aspects of the *AC: E* as manageable and not too demanding of their time, since the online access expedites preparation for teachers. Participants recognise new functional aspects of the *AC: E* including provision of online resources such as the curriculum itself via the ACARA website, and online national resource repositories such as *Scootle* – an online repository of *Australian Curriculum* learning resources. While these online resources may encourage greater efficacy, teachers note that accessing such resources does require some training and therefore cost some planning time.

This category indicates that despite level of teaching experience and collegial support, the implementation of the *AC: E* required some modification of practice by and additional time for teacher participants to acquire confidence or certainty in understanding *AC: E* content in readiness for classroom delivery.

#### **4.3.3 Summary of the Categories**

Through a constructivist grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 2006), this section has described the processes employed for and examples of coding analysis of the questionnaire and interview transcript data. Seven categories were reconstructed from the focused codes. These categories indicate participant experiences, perspectives of, and professional needs for the *AC: E* implementation in Tasmanian secondary schools during 2013 and 2014. These categories facilitate the axial coding phase for development of the resulting five themes for this research.

## 4.4 Axial Coding for Themes

As briefly described in the previous chapter, axial coding is the third and final phase of data analysis in constructivist grounded theory analysis before the discourse analysis (Charmaz, 2006, 2013; Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Charmaz (2006) defines axial coding as a coding phase, which “relates categories to subcategories, specifies the properties and dimensions of a category, and reassembles the data you have fractured during initial coding to give coherence to the emerging analysis” (p. 60). Themes are created through the use of axial coding. An axial code is the axis or pivoting point of interconnected relationships between categories to “weave the fractured story back together” (Glaser, 1978, p. 72), which assists in the construction of themes. The identified themes are then constructed into discourses. In this axial coding phase, the seven categories as described in section 4.3.2 of this chapter (see also Table 4.9), were reconsidered for similarities and fundamental ideas, and then aggregated, forming five axial themes (see Table 4.10, Appendix C.5). The resulting themes are shown in Table 4.11.

*Table 4.11 – Themes*

THEMES		Frequency
1	Perspectives of reform	319
2	Systemic efficacy and clarity for reform	962
3	Teacher agency and induced self-efficacy	333
4	Satiated and hovering needs	608
5	Time factors for teachers	477

This phase of the constructivist grounded theory data analysis “helps [to] clarify and to extend the analytic power of [the] emerging ideas” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). The five themes in Table 4.11 encapsulate the persistent and commonly found perspectives and issues of the AC: *E* reform for participants, from the questionnaire and interview transcript data. These themes are reconstructed into

the dominant discourses and discussed in Chapter Five. Sections 4.4.1 to 4.4.5 below provide a general introduction to the themes with the categories and researcher perspectives that developed them.

#### **4.4.1 Theme 1 – Perspectives of reform**

Theme 1 – Perspectives of reform, was constructed through the connections made between focused codes 1, Problematic perspective, and 2, Progressive perspective, which formed Category 1: Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform. Although participants recorded divergent perspectives for a range of aspects of the *AC: E*, this theme is an assembly of participants' positive, negative, and ambivalent attitudes and perspectives towards the *AC: E* and its implementation as a whole. This theme was constructed through consideration of teacher statements about the professional impact, and value of the *AC: E* for teacher participants.

Negative, ambivalent, or statements of compliance by teacher participants formed focused code 1, Problematic perspective. This grouping of problematic notions of the implementation of the *AC: E* included recognition of teacher participant frustration and overwhelmed emotions toward and hegemonic concern for, the content of the *AC: E* and associated resources, and superordinate stakeholder implementation processes. Participants' identification of positive or useful aspects of the *AC: E* for their teaching practice and pedagogical content knowledge were included in the second focused code, Progressive perspective, that add to this theme of teacher perspectives of the *AC: E* reform.

Most importantly, this theme acknowledges the importance of teacher participant perspectives of curriculum reform, as driven by their interpretation of *AC: E* content and superordinate stakeholder treatment of resources and teachers. This theme emphasises teacher resilience to overcome and continue practice despite perceived impediments.

#### **4.4.2 Theme 2 – Systemic efficacy and clarity for reform**

The second theme, Systemic efficacy and clarity for reform, consists of categories, which indicate teacher participant perspectives of superordinate stakeholder efficacy and clarity in bringing about the *AC: E* implementation. Categories included in this theme are category 2: Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy (see section 4.3.2.2), and 3: Pragmatic and Recondite clarity (see section 4.3.2.3). The overarching theme of superordinate stakeholder efficacy and clarity explores how teachers perceived the efficacy of *AC: E* implementation processes, coupled with clarity of and access to information and teaching resources. This theme is connected to the supply and effectiveness of *AC: E* related resources. Extant *AC: E* resource availability was of concern for all participants, which influenced their perspective of superordinate stakeholder efficacy and clarity, and their opinions of equitable processes for teacher practice.

Superordinate stakeholder efficacy is identified through teacher perspectives relating to the proficiency of provisions being supplied to teachers for mandate requirements. Proficiency of *AC: E* provisions via superordinate stakeholders include resource allocation, access to resources for teachers, and efficiency of the delivery of *AC: E* information to teachers. This aspect of the theme included participant acknowledgement of what they perceived as effective and ineffective strategies for, and demands on teachers to implement the *AC: E*. This theme illustrates teachers' perceived hegemonic discord and agreement between stakeholders, which facilitates discussion for effective education reform resource materials and processes for teachers.

#### **4.4.3 Theme 3 – Teacher agency and induced self-efficacy**

Theme 3 – Teacher agency and induced self-efficacy, is made of two categories, 4: Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy (see section 4.3.2.4), and 5:



Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency (see section 4.3.2.5). This was a theme that emerged throughout the questionnaire and interview transcript data, representing a reflection of participants' perceived self-efficacy as a result of systemic or superordinate stakeholder influence, and their perspective of professional trust or agency placed in them by superordinate stakeholders.

Participants' perspectives of teacher agency were found through the identification of superordinate efficacy and implementation management or control of *AC: E* resources, as discovered in themes 2 and 4, and the extant text data. Notably, identification of participants' denigration of their perceived lack of access to *AC: E* resources and collegial sharing of these resources was found in two of three Tasmanian education sectors. This was further evidenced by the third sector's apparent restricted, authorised access to a much larger quantity of *AC: E* resources (see Table 4.1), which vastly outnumbered the resources of the two other education sectors. Further, this theme also highlighted participants' perspectives of a lack of superordinate stakeholder respect for teachers' professional capacity during the *AC: E* reform despite functioning under duress with limited resources. These aspects impacted participants' perspectives of their self-efficacy and professional agency within their practice. This theme acknowledges teacher perspectives of systemic and superordinate support of teachers during educational change, wherein teachers seek to perform with high self-efficacy for better education outcomes for students.

#### **4.4.4 Theme 4 – Satiated and hovering needs**

Theme 4 – Satiated and hovering needs, is a substantial theme, with inclusion of the second most frequently identified category 6: Satiated and Hovering needs (see 4.3.2.6). Category 6 details participant perspective of the extent to which professional needs have been met, and to discuss the needs that are only partially met or are yet to be met by superordinate stakeholders for

equitable and supported practice for teachers. Theme 4 notes a professional learning and mentoring deficit across the three Tasmanian education sectors for secondary school English teacher stakeholders. This theme expresses issues identified by teachers regarding ineffective or minimal superordinate management efficacy for the *AC: E* implementation process, including the type and amount of *AC: E* information for teachers, and time release and professional learning opportunity availability for teachers.

This theme is a result of disparity between the perceived level of needs that have been met compared to those that teacher participants recognise as vital for practice, but have not been addressed. A key concept within this theme is the hegemonic tension between teacher need versus curriculum requirements. The working or supportive relationship between mandate and support is not evident in teacher responses within the data, despite an expectation by superordinates of teacher stakeholders to comply with mandated curriculum reform.

This significant theme is important in that it portrays teachers' understanding of what they require as professionals in order to practise self-efficaciously on a daily and longer-term basis, to improve their pedagogical content knowledge and capacity to practise with confidence. Additionally, this theme addresses the second research aim to identify areas of pragmatic support and professional development necessary for practising Secondary English teachers in Tasmania, through the explication of teacher participants' perceived needs during education reform.

#### **4.4.5 Theme 5 – Time factors for teachers**

The final theme, Theme 5 – Time factors for teachers, explores teacher perspectives of workload and the *AC: E* implementation timeframe. This theme arises directly from Category 7: Practicable and Impracticable workloads and timeframes (see 4.3.2.7). This theme allows consideration of the tension between

the *AC: E* implementation mandate requirements and the workload required for teachers to meet it. Two key concepts evident in this theme are reform fatigue and teacher stress, where expectation of and reality for teachers are illustrated throughout participant responses in the questionnaire and interview transcript data. This was a theme that consisted of responses by all participants, who noted a persistent lack of time. Lack of time impacted teacher ability to attend and sustain professional development, owing to funding availability to provide time release, for familiarisation of *AC: E* content. Professional development and familiarisation with the *AC: E* would produce intrinsic self-confidence of professional capacity in order to prepare effectively for lesson delivery. Theme 5 emerged through recording of teacher concern about an apparent stress-inducing workload during educational change. This renders theme 5 as an important aspect of teacher perspectives on the implementation of the *AC: E*.

#### **4.4.6 Summary of Themes**

This section has detailed five themes found in the questionnaire and interview data after application of constructivist grounded theory coding. These five themes capture teacher perspectives of and needs for the *AC: E* implementation from across the three Tasmanian education sectors from the questionnaire and interview transcript data that were collected during 2013 and 2014. These themes create a foundation for theoretical discussion and are reconstructed into the dominant discourses of this research.

### **4.5 Summary of Data Analysis**

This chapter has provided a summary of the initial codes, focused coding and categories, and axial themes found in the questionnaire and interview transcript data, using the processes of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz,

2006). Commonly found perspectives and issues for English teachers during the AC: E implementation in Tasmanian secondary schools have been outlined in this chapter. Description of the coding process has identified emergent themes from the data in readiness for examination in the following two chapters.

The phases of data analysis moved through identification of pragmatic issues in teacher statements, starting with uninterrupted preliminary and initial codes, to more conceptual analysis during the focused and thematic phases. Constructivist grounded theory allows for inferences and interconnections between ideas and codes to be made.

Using a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985, 2001a), Chapter Five will reconstruct the five identified themes into discourses and explore how they address the two research aims. The critical discourse analysis process is an examination of interrelated influences and effects found in the data, which inform this case study of English teacher perspectives of, and teacher needs for, curriculum reform in Tasmanian secondary schools.

## Critical Discourse Analysis

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### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter is informed by the stages of Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (2001a). The five stages (Fairclough, 2001a) which inform the critical discourse analysis of this research:

1. Focus upon a social problem, which has a semiotic aspect.
2. Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
  - a. The network of practices it is located within
  - b. The relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
  - c. The discourse (the semiosis itself)
    - Linguistic and semiotic analysis.
3. Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense 'needs' the problem.
4. Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
5. Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4). (Fairclough, 2001a, p. 125)

Stage 1 identifies the problem of reform implementation as difficult for teachers in Tasmania, through the consideration of past education reform review literature (Garsed, 2013). Stage 2 identifies AC: E reform issues, using the data from questionnaire and interview transcripts. Stage 3 identifies the importance of the problem in the implementation of curriculum reform. Stages 4 and 5 provide a basis for Chapter Six, where the research aims are addressed through the findings of the critical discourse analysis, which identify hegemonic issues and seek possible ways to address them (Fairclough, 2001a). Stage 5 of the analysis is

supported by references to the literature that support the issues identified by the researcher, found in the discourses.

In this chapter, the five themes which emerged from the preceding data analysis are reconstructed by the researcher into two dominant discourses for a deeper analysis shaped by a critical discourse analysis, using a poststructural feminist lens building new constructs that make a significant contribution to the field. The two dominant discourses address the two research aims, using the constructivist grounded theory coding processes (Charmaz, 2006) and the critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001a) stages of this research. The analysis is also informed by the extant texts (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Ralph et al., 2014) that were collected by the researcher.

The research aims of this thesis are to explore Tasmanian English teachers' perspectives of the *Australian Curriculum: English* implementation in regard to their practice, and to identify the professional needs of these teachers as subordinate stakeholders during reform. A critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985; Kress, 1985; Wodak, 2009) addresses the research aims by exploring the language used by participants in the data (Fairclough, 2001b; Gee, 2011; Kress, 1989; Weedon, 1997). This chapter explores the two dominant discourses constructed by the researcher, and the pragmatic and hegemonic tensions that form them. This chapter also looks at the impact of the discourses for teachers during educational reform and what is silent within these discourses to further explore teacher perspectives of the implementation of the *AC: E* and their needs for it.

A critical discourse analysis explores the detail found through the data analysis processes and emergent themes. This approach to analysis enables a deeper consideration of issues raised by the research participants (Fairclough, 1985, 2001a), identified by the researcher as common and significant issues that impact these research participants as a cohort (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz &

Mitchell, 2001; Gee, 2011; Pinar, 2013). This research is informed by poststructural feminist theory in which a critical discourse analysis is “concerned with all forms of social inequality” (Lazar, 2005, p. 2). A strength of critical discourse analysis is that it explores the social construction of specific research sites (Richards & Morse, 2007), such as in this study of Tasmanian secondary schools during educational change. The chapter identifies current issues for teachers regarding education reform, the relationship between theory and practice (Jones & Ryan, 2014), and teacher workloads (Williamson & Myhill, 2008).

## **5.1 Discourses**

This chapter focuses on two dominant discourses constructed from the teachers’ data by the researcher, which articulate reform pressures and reactions to national education reform in Tasmanian secondary school English classrooms. The discourses are named the Discourse of Conformity and the Discourse of Dynamic Teacher Reflexivity. These dominant discourses were constructed from the rigorous processes of the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) data analysis. This chapter analyses the dominant discourses in terms of language, power, and ideology (Weedon, 1997).

### **5.1.1 The Discourse of Conformity**

The Discourse of Conformity is a reconstruction of the themes that address Research Aim One, which explores English teacher perspectives of the *Australian Curriculum* reform in Tasmanian secondary schools. These themes include superordinate efficacy, resource administration, time or workload pressures, and teacher agency. These issues impact on the desire of teachers to conform or work effectively with curriculum change.

The Discourse of Conformity integrates the broader concepts recognised by the teacher participants as superordinate stakeholder demands during education reform, which teachers were expected to implement despite the teachers' working conditions. This discourse emerges from the teacher participants' recognition of the expectation from their superordinate stakeholders, that teachers will conform to meet external or federal bureaucratic education reform demands. The Discourse of Conformity characterises the teachers' perspectives of the implementation processes of the *AC: E*, in regard to their practice and professional agency. The Discourse of Conformity explores the deviation or gaps between broader system demands and what was provided to subordinate or frontline stakeholders, for the implementation of the *AC: E*. The variance of implementation between Australian states noted in the introduction and literature review of this thesis, highlights the need for discussion about the issues that this discourse brings to the fore, for the review of educational reform processes in schools (Australian Government, 2014a; Drabsch, 2013; Senate Select Committee on School Funding, 2014).

The Tasmanian secondary school teachers involved in this research were expected to implement the curriculum changes despite teachers clearly saying that their schools are "so poor" (P2). These teachers work warily according to their resources and immediate classroom needs with the perspective that their teacher agency is challenged. This issue is supported by the reform literature (Bush, 2011; Mockler, 2013; Simbula, Panari, Guglielmi, & Fraccaroli, 2012). One participant said that reform mandate requires changes in their school that are not practically or financially feasible, noting that it causes:

Stress, anxiety. It's too much. There are so many background things that get in the way of being a teacher at the moment. We get no money. No sharing [from superordinates]. We have to make do with nothing. An oily rag would have more funding than what we have. You have to think



about how to make castles out of two grains of sand. Really. What goes in there to the actual teaching and learning? It's a credit to the staff that the school is as good as it is. (P2)

The teacher's language clearly shows the lack of funding or support to facilitate reform as stressful, difficult, and disempowering, which causes teachers to question the respect for the amount of input by and agency of teachers (Jensen et al., 2014; Rodwell, 2009). The teacher participants, through the language used, note the importance of having to support each other collegially to conform to mandate demands (Rogers, 2002a). Frequent comment amongst the teacher participants such as that made by Participant 2, was that there is limited funding for *AC: E* resources, which impacts on their ability to understand and confidently implement the *AC: E* (Gemedá & Tynjälä, 2015). The language is negative and explicates the participants' perspective of a compromised situation for teachers during reform. Teachers such as Participant 6, note that collegial input and support is important to compensate for *AC: E* provision shortcomings, where "Meetings and reviews allow follow-up and collaboration, with good teacher input into the process. It [reform] is a top down process but it remains more involving than that in [our school]." This excerpt shows the importance of teacher input, or, involvement, to enable reform to happen in schools.

The expectance of superordinate stakeholders for teachers to conform to curriculum changes is met with teacher disappointment for the lack of resource provision or direction for practice. This was asserted by one participant who used language that explicitly tells of confusing curriculum reform processes:

There is no official or particular AC roll-out guide or implementation model; each state, jurisdiction, sector and school across the nation have been implementing the *Australian Curriculum* in ways they see fit for their particular cohort/'clientele' [students] - which was the intention of ACARA from the outset. ACARA has always maintained that the

curriculum is simply a framework for teaching and learning, not a checklist or template. The problem with this, however, is the huge diversity between schools, sectors and jurisdictions and across the country, with interpretation and implementation varying immensely. Yes, it's great that we have a consistent curriculum, but because it is so open to interpretation and "tweaking", [that] the intended consistency is somewhat diminished, if not lost completely. Assessment causes great anxiety amongst teachers where they feel lost and like they are completely making it up as they go. (P8)

The comment of this participant about the *AC: E* as feeling “lost” reflects a frequent comment found throughout the study, suggesting that the unsupported implementation processes caused lack of direction, therefore confusion and anxiety. The discourse identifies an undercurrent of “great anxiety” and ambivalence amongst participants towards reform including the application of the *AC: E* in the classroom. Another participant reiterated the confusion and frustration for the lack of resource support and direction in saying that:

It would just be nice to have that time to be able to do that but for us to be able to take ownership with this, for the leadership to acknowledge that we are professionals, that we have been doing this for an amount of time – so let's get there and work this out together. This would help new teachers along the way, support teachers instead of letting them wander without purpose. Give teachers support so that they know what they are doing to be able to take a little bit of that pressure off. This would be good for their confidence, too. Recognition would be incredible. (P5)

This participant presents an explicit and commonly found plea from teachers that they require clarity and increased support from the authorities, which is vital to facilitate the work expected of teachers so that they are not left “wandering” without support to meet demand. The language used in comments such as those

of Participant 5 show that the participants believe that they would feel more confident in their work if better supported, to know what they are to be “doing”, to “take a little bit of that pressure off” their workload. Further to this, another participant notes the confusion of the AC: E implementation processes, in saying that:

There is no follow up. No. We just touched on that [AC: E content information for teachers], and then we go and touch on something else and then something else. So we’ve touched on curriculum documents and what a scope and sequence is meant to be. So we are stuck at ‘what is a scope and sequence’. But in that, there are differences of opinion about what a scope and sequence is. So, nobody knows really, what we are doing. I also don’t think that the people driving it really have a clear idea about what they are doing either. (P2)

What this highlights, is a disconcerted feeling among teachers, that their work is confusing and demanding through not being fully supported with provision of AC: E resources and direction by their superordinates.

A lack of confidence in understanding the AC: E was shown in the language used by teacher participants, and is experienced in schools, where one participant explains, for example, that:

There’s all this really negative [...] language [...] about the AC: E reform]. I think that people are relatively happy about what they’re doing in their classrooms, but they’re not overly confident in saying ‘I’m teaching the AC: E really well, or assessing it really well’. It’s about [the] development of resources. [...] I don’t know if I’d be comfortable sharing my work with other teachers because I am still testing, very much so. (P1)

This participant’s language reports a perspective in the research data that there is a “really negative” atmosphere of uncertainty. The language reveals a lack of

confidence in teacher knowledge of the *AC: E*. It also reveals a lack of support or motivation to share knowledge in a positive collegial way. In trying to conform with the changes of the *AC: E* reform, teachers held back in the sharing of their resources due to a lack of confidence in their understanding. Teachers describe feeling more confident in being told the content of, and how to teach components of the *AC: E*. Moreover, the language of the teachers reveals a negativity created from a lack of *AC: E* support. This is problematic as it indicates that if teachers do not feel confident in their work, even when guided by appropriate and available resources, then a reading could be that there are too few resources, or that the resources provided are not clear or sufficient for teacher needs.

The teacher participants' language reveals that the teachers rely on the vital, necessary resources from internal superordinate and external superordinate stakeholders to assist in the transition to and implementation (Hay, 2003) of the *AC: E*. One teacher participant voiced through the use of strong language, a noticeable "big gap" (P1) or difference between previous curriculum reform and the recent *AC: E* implementation provisions, that:

There seemed to be a big gap. You could read the curriculum online... there was ACARA releasing documents, kind of AITSL involved at a similar time. But I think that when the *ELs* [*Essential Learnings*; an earlier Tasmanian curriculum] was rolling out – there was money, [there were] PD days and a whole bunch of people on the ground coming into schools and working with schools and getting people into the new curriculum that way. I think that that middle layer didn't exist this time.

(P1)

From this, it can be seen that teachers such as Participant 1, have preconceived expectations about adequate reform provisions in expecting sufficient and effective professional support to enable implementation of reform and teacher practice. The teacher participant's language also shows that there have not been

sufficient provisions for current reform or that the necessary provisions for reform “didn’t exist”. The use of this language indicates that different priorities in superordinate approaches to the resourcing of reform compared to previous reform, impacts upon the teachers’ experience and perspective of educational reform. In this Discourse of Conformity, the teachers reveal that their experience of the implementation of the previous Essential Learnings (Tasmanian Department of Education, 2009) curriculum (Garsed, 2014; Rodwell, 2009), had led them to expect that the *Australian Curriculum* reform would be implemented with a readily available supply of reform resources (Victorian Government, 2012) to support their teaching.

The language of one teacher participant indicates that teachers feel “ridiculously stressed” (P3) due to lack of access to necessary resources. The teacher participants perceived inequitable and unrealistic demands to conform and practise without adequate tools. The language used in an email provided to the researcher by one of the participants (P6), shows a lack of equitable resource access between education sectors in Tasmania. This email concerned Participant 6’s request to find out about accessing some external professional learning. The forwarded email from research Participant 6 reads:

As a teacher currently working casually in Tasmania, am I able to enrol in [your] courses? Obviously PL opportunities are very scarce for CRTs [contract replacement teachers] and fixed-term contractors so I want to be pro-active in chasing opportunities.

If it is possible, what is the process? I guess the answer is that no; CRTs can't join [your] programs without it being teed up by a school? (P6, personal communication, April 18, 2014)

The response to Participant 6 (P6) from the professional learning vendor caused P6 to contact the researcher of this project, since P6 was aware of the researcher’s interest in professional learning offerings for teachers. The professional learning

vendor's response to P6 reads:

Response: We actually haven't had this question before... The common scenario is that [our education sector] schools pay for their staff to be involved. We do have [the other two education sectors'] schools enrol people from time to time but we charge them a much higher rate (as a [sector A] body we subsidise [our education sector] employees, hence why the cost is only \$80 per day. We recognise you would be paying for yourself, so we certainly wouldn't charge you the high rate we charge [other] schools – I will actually need to check this situation with my manager and get back to you. (P6, personal communication, April 18, 2014)

This email exchange demonstrates the issue of equitable resource or professional learning access for teachers between the different education sectors in Tasmania. The teacher participant, who provided this email, indicates that working across education sectors as a replacement teacher, including during educational reform, is difficult. The language indicates an exclusivity of particular sectors, highlighting frustration for excluded teachers and the need for improved access to essential resources, which is related to resource provision and professional learning needs. The words “opportunities are very scarce” indicate that the participant feels that there is a lack of access to sufficient resources. This causes distress and frustration, even non-conformity in teachers' refusal to adjust curriculum materials since “there's no point in making all of these changes [for the *AC: E* reform]. I am sticking with it now until they figure out what they are going to do” (P5), in addition to desperation for access to relevant collegial solutions (Rogers, 2002a, 2002b).

The Discourse of Conformity speaks of the time or workload stressors that are created by the issues identified above, including resource inequities for English teachers in Tasmanian secondary schools. One teacher participant likens

the lack of professional support to an emergency, noting, “Efficient teaching is only done when the teacher feels capable and supported. Having teachers treading water without sign of rescue, spells disaster” (P7). The language of one newer teacher shows that there is a common perspective that complying with reform despite lack of reasonable resource provision, induces stress:

My issue is that I don’t even necessarily have any more solutions to deal with the teaching workload. My solution would be to add another seven hours to the day to get the work done that is expected of us. We are so tired at the end of the day. We need more time to get this planning done. For me, I wonder whether if teaching is sustainable. The workload is too much – way out there. It’s the added pressure. That’s our life at the moment. (P3)

This teacher participant emphasises the exhaustion of not having “any more solutions to deal with the teaching workload” and difficulty in conforming to the reform mandate in addition to their myriad of regular teaching duties and accountabilities (Gozzoli, Frascaroli, & D’Angelo, 2015). Other teacher participants emphasise this and equate the difficulty of teaching under reform processes to be “complete bedlam... [Because] we don’t have any time for it. You’re meant to do it because you’re meant to love your work. Teachers have lives too, so finding time for planning is almost impossible” (P2). Such emotional and passionate language, regarding system demands to conform to and implement the curriculum without an adequate timeframe or time release to digest the changes, indicates that inadequate implementation processes cause teacher stress. This is seen in the teachers’ language when the teachers try to conform to the “planning” (P2) and assessment demands required by the curriculum (Bradbury, 2012; Dilkes et al., 2014; Gardner & Williamson, 2004; Williamson & Myhill, 2008). As a further example of this frustration regarding timeframe, one teacher participant says that:

We were just astonished at the lack of support; then there was the internal debate on the content. Amazingly difficult and absolutely no time to feel confident in the work. We need support – we can't wait – we just have to go and get into it. But we feel so uncertain about it. We desperately need to let them [superordinates] know that we ALL need more time, support, access and interaction. (P6)

Feeling “astonished” indicates that the teacher participant feels that the implementation processes are taking an unusual and perhaps confused direction with explicit reference to “internal debate on the content” at their school site in trying to meet timeframes without support. This Discourse recognises that the language of teachers reveals that internal conflict about the *AC: E* content and reform processes is commonplace, where comments from participants such as Participant 6 repeatedly call for an increase in curriculum reform support. Internal conflict on content also indicates lack of clarity about how to utilise and assess with the *AC: E*, making reform “amazingly difficult” to work with.

The language shows that attempting to conform to time constraints without support, results in teacher participants questioning their ability to maintain their teaching workload. This results in teacher perspectives of ambivalence or resistance (Day, Elliot, & Kingston, 2005; Gardner & Williamson, 2004) to the curriculum reform. The issue of workload is noted by teacher participants citing difficulty in meeting reform changes:

That's where you find it hard; you just don't have time to go through and go back and have a look at the general capabilities of literacy – that's what I find time consuming, where they're not being realistic on teachers to a certain degree with teaching loads where you don't always have time to go back and think about it, even though you'd like to. (P4)

This teacher participant also uses language that echoes the common issue amongst participants of a time consuming workload, stress, and confusion about the *AC: E*



content and pressure to comply. This teacher participant emphasises an ambivalent and unimpressed perspective that “they’re [the superordinate stakeholders are] not being realistic”, with teachers feeling that their superordinate stakeholders have an expectation of teachers to conform and maintain regular “teaching loads”. Teacher Participant 2 raised concern about this issue, in saying in their interview, that “Workload. You cannot cover the complete curriculum. As long as you cover the main parts from each strand; if you’ve got literature, literacy and language; you’ve covered that in the writing – then that is all you need.” (P2). Participant 2 suggests here, that a complex or heavy workload does not allow for thorough *AC: E* implementation by teachers, but that they are trying to cover the basics for it. The language of teacher participants expresses a burden of reform and a resentment about the perceived lack of stakeholder awareness for teacher workload. These issues raised in the Discourse of Conformity impact on teacher agency (Lim & Eo, 2014).

Teacher agency is an aspect of the Discourse of Conformity wherein teachers are positioned as the frontline yet subordinate stakeholders, who follow directives as necessary to meet curriculum requirements. One teacher participant’s language showed this, in saying that:

[Sector A’s] process was an absolute basket case. It was not useful, supportive or instructive. In the [Sector B] system I felt supported to carry out the curriculum being implemented at the time, with adequate resourcing on demand, though it’s still mostly a case of self-educating if you are bouncing around replacement positions. (P6)

The language of Participant 6 indicates an ability to articulate the differences in support that they find while being employed between education sectors. The participant equates the support of implementation in one sector to “an absolute basket case” compared to another sector, in which they “felt supported” by “adequate resourcing on demand” or as needed. However, the participant notes

additionally, that teachers who are not permanently employed are left to “self-educate”, adding onus on the teacher to access reform resources independently. Curriculum reform as mass mandate increases system pressures on all stakeholders and that teachers can feel disadvantaged by the sector in which they are employed, as shown in the email between the replacement teacher (P6) through their comments contrasting sector experience during reform.

Teacher workload pressure to conform creates sectoral hegemonic pressures on implementation (Gramsci, 2000) for teachers. The language used by one teacher participant, who is an English faculty head, shows that asking colleagues to comply with focused *AC: E* directions, is an “unfair demand; it is asking a bit too much on top of the load that they [colleagues] already have” (P1). Though the same participant sees value in asking colleagues to carry out specific tasks, they feel that their requests would rebound negatively, with their perspective that “It would increase the accountability, which is fine [and] it would give them a really explicit reason to continue to engage really deeply with the document, but I just feel that it mightn't even lead to better teaching” (P1). Note that this teacher participant perceives that changes of educational direction “mightn't even [able to] lead to better teaching”, suggesting a view of educational reform as change for change's sake, or cause for professional tension and frustration for teachers. A reading of this is that the teachers feel under pressure to work under the *AC: E* and that even school faculty leaders do not feel comfortable or confident about the *AC: E* changes and requirements. Implicit and explicit strictures are placed on teachers in order to facilitate superordinate stakeholders' anticipated expedient implementation, yet the strictures resulted in impeded and incomplete implementation (Simons, 2013) for the teacher participants of this research.

The Discourse of Conformity acknowledges implicit strictures or limitations on use of school funding as found in the data, including a surreptitious

(dis)allocation of funding for time release for collegial and professional development support. For example, in one school, there was a protocol for teachers to “justify” (P4) to their heads of faculty, that any professional development that teachers seek, must be of value to the faculty rather than the teacher as individual. A faculty head teacher participant notes that:

[For the] English department, I put down pulling apart the strands as one of our focus points; so if there is PD available, then the English department are allowed to go to the PD if it is centred around that. You need to have some sort of direction, a justification. (P5)

While it is important to have a goal for a teaching team, this teacher participant’s language illustrates that there is stricture by way of limiting school-funded professional development choices to suit the English department’s stipulated focus. This is professionally limiting, but indicates possible funding issues and pressure for internal superordinates to conform by encouraging their English teachers to adhere to internal policy. This was also evident from another teacher (P4) from a different education sector. Participant 4 cites that resources and professional learning should be as needed or “gradual; something that we have to do rather than a privilege” (P4). This participant uses explicit language, which suggests that accessing professional learning is difficult, and is perceived in schools as a “privilege” (P4). This language emphasises the high value that teachers place on professional learning (Allen, Ambrosetti, & Turner, 2013) and in teacher willingness to conform to supportive reform processes.

Seeking professional development “that would match with what [head of faculty] set out for the department” (P4) reiterates the practical constraints for schools, even during reform. Explicit strictures for teachers also encompass control of resources by way of limited resource access to documents in education repositories and demand to restrict resource access to school site level. One teacher explicitly agreed that the resources for the AC: *E* are restricted, or

privately shared. The participant says that there are “particular resources that we keep to ourselves” (P5). This participant shows that there are restricted resources that are particular or confined to the school and or sector, suggesting that the resources are hard-fought for or costly to create or access.

In the Discourse of Conformity, one teacher participant states, “it’s the added pressure [of reform]. There is not even any room there for human error. From the parents, the government – you cannot make any error. It’s your job” (P3). This teacher participant is a newer teacher who feels that they must comply and not “make any error” in their teaching practice. Further to this, teachers such as Participant 3, indicate that the pressure of mandated accountabilities for teachers linger, despite lack of support in stating that:

Job security and job performance – everybody has been heightened [work stress] because of this accountability. The fact that disciplines like nursing and teaching can be quantified to a set of outcomes because you can actually put in the same amount of information – [*sarcastic voice*]: because we are all robots... and then they’re all going to come out the same at the end and there’ll be a measure. Well we all know that nursing and teaching is not like that. There are these bureaucrats that keep wanting to justify it through, if you have more productivity, then we can give you more money. That’s the same with NAPLAN. Oh, that’s another kettle. If we get this amount of results – OOOH! You’re doing a good job, so we’ll give you more money. Hang on a minute – if we’re not doing a good job – it actually means that we need more help. Can you give us some money to be able to help these kids to actually get our NAPLAN scores up? ‘No. We’ll benefit the ones who actually get good scores.’ It’s totally backwards. (P3)

The Discourse of Conformity shows that in the control and management of resources including of teachers, there is a level of disregard and lack of trust

for teachers and their practice, often reflected in a firm superordinate control. This Discourse of Conformity shows that teachers are willing to conform to these parameters out of concern for maintaining their employment and for the support of their colleagues in fronting the same mandate directives where homophily or a supportive collegial culture is important.

In the Discourse of Conformity, the language of the teacher participants shows that a level of superordinate stakeholder efficacy of implementation processes and provisions, are lacking in the Tasmanian education sectors (Mulford & Edmunds, 2009; Mulford, Edmunds, Kendall, Kendall, & Bishop, 2008). The teachers show, in their use of language which informs this discourse, that there are pragmatic deficiencies in curriculum reform processes, which impact on teacher practice and teacher agency.

### **5.1.2 The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity**

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity explores the challenges that teachers endure during curriculum reform. This discourse examines the language of the teachers, in response to Research Aim Two. The language explores aspects of equitable processes and provisions during and post reform in English classes of Tasmanian secondary schools. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity examines the processes and practices that teachers concede to in the processes of reform. In this discourse, individual autonomy is discussed by teachers dealing with change under system pressures and accountabilities, including the AC: E reporting and assessment requirements.

For this research, teacher reflexivity is defined as the pragmatic teacher response to professional demands. Teacher reflexivity also indicates how teacher participants respond to and conform to the mandate of the *Australian Curriculum* in secondary school English classrooms. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity

refers to teacher adaptation to classroom demands whilst addressing superordinate demand. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity gives voice to teachers' responses to the demands identified in the Discourse of Conformity, through finding solutions to problems identified during reform implementation (Edge, 2011; Moni, Haertling Thein, & Brindley, 2014).

Equitable processes of education reform are explored through teacher language, to identify the gaps between demand and supply for the implementation of reform. Equitable process for teachers during reform via superordinate stakeholders, is seen by teachers to be vital for teacher efficacy (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2012). This aspect of the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity deals with the provision of, or timely access to, relevant reform and English subject resources for stakeholders and effective stakeholder communication, including consideration of subordinate stakeholder feedback. For example, one teacher participant says that teachers are:

concerned about the review of the curriculum, because to [them] it wouldn't be far from 'oh no, another new curriculum', even if it's just tweaked or changed. But if it was tweaked or changed and [they] were supported through those changes, it'd be a different picture. The potential of curriculum review is daunting and disappointing. (P1)

Language such as this from Participant 1, is frequent in the data and represents teacher awareness of the disregard for and the casual positioning of teachers in the reform process, resulting in teachers seeing themselves as superficial stakeholders who are overlooked, particularly when teachers use language that says "if [... they] were supported through these changes" (P1). The idea of "curriculum review [was] daunting" for teachers who report not fully understanding the content of the *AC: E*. Teacher participants reinforce this through the use of explicit language about the *AC: E* reform implementation. One teacher claims that the reform process "is not transparent. [That] it's meant to come via the

Principal, via the secondary coordinators and then to us. That really hasn't happened and specifically for us in English, it hasn't happened at all" (P2). This teacher participant points out that they are "meant to" or expect to receive direction or clarity of information for reform with streamlined, organised process. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals that the teachers are not experiencing this, as evidenced in the comment that support "hasn't happened at all" (P2). This is reinforced again with teacher participants citing confusion about the reform in saying that they "have lost trust. Tell me what are we doing this for? If it's not about increasing the teaching and learning that's happening in our classrooms, then really what are we doing this for?" (P2). The language in this portion of one teacher participant's interview illustrates a commonly articulated perspective of education reform, including the *AC: E* implementation, as one that is confusing and considered meaningless for teachers and students in asking "What are we doing this for?" Words such as "lost trust" indicate a less than favourable reliance on superordinate stakeholders for adequate information and resources for teachers. This loss of trust results in frustration, cynicism about reform processes and the perspective of undervalued agency of teachers. Teacher agency must be valued to promote self-efficacy (Priestley et al., 2016).

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity is an exploration of teacher comment about "scarce" (P6) superordinate stakeholder support for the curriculum reform. The Discourse reveals that teachers feel compelled to recover and proceed with teaching independently to enable effective practice. An example from one teacher shows that they are continuing to work as before, to "just find a way to make what we've got fit with the AC" (P1), since "there's no point in making all of these changes. [...] If the units already existed and you had your learning sequence [...] the main thing would be having time to use the curriculum to your advantage and to use it effectively" (P4). The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals that teacher participants feel reticent in changing their

materials to suit a new curriculum. The language shows that teachers desperately attempted to make their resources “fit” the *AC: E*, which they feel is not fully implemented, in saying that “there’s no point in making all of these changes” (P4).

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity also reveals the professional energy that teachers use to connect with colleagues due to the “scarce” (P6) resources, to support each other to understand the *AC: E*. Teacher participants spoke of the importance of proactive collegiality to support each other, through such comments as:

What goes in there to the actual teaching and learning... [nods] It’s a credit to the staff that the school is as good as it is; it’s really the staff, that are the ones - yet we don’t get valued. We don’t get valued. We get totally undervalued all the way through the whole process. Really, it’s the staff support of each other here and at other schools who would love to do it so much more. (P2)

This teacher participant explicates how teachers’ unreciprocated and unrecognised efforts are overlooked by superordinate stakeholders in the facilitation the *AC: E* reform in their school and cross-sectorally. However, this indication of supportive collegial responsibility requires teachers’ prior knowledge of effective adaptive practice. This is gained through teaching experience under previous curriculum, reflective awareness, and the realisation that the *AC: E* implementation necessitates collegial collaboration, support, and functional or pragmatic resolve through professional provisions (Rogers, 2002a).

Pragmatic resolve is a reflexive action for teachers and relates to the teachers’ identification of the professional learning needs that they perceive as required to be met to improve their practice. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity identifies that professional learning opportunities in schools are available but not always relevant to teacher needs. This is strongly emphasised



by the teacher participants using specific language to state that “without question, we need more assistance with professional development, tailored for teachers in the way of focused grammar and delivery methods” (P4) and, “I think that [professional learning needs would] be different for each teacher – what they [superordinate stakeholders] do is being problematic. You can’t possibly be able to cover everyone’s needs in one block” (P6). The use of language indicators such as “tailored”, “focused”, and “different” professional development shows need for appropriate professional learning rather than more general approaches that do not impact on or improve the teacher’s understanding. Teacher participants noted their need for more *AC: E* assistance and that they find that accessing private professional learning is beneficial, yet stressful in saying that “more detail would be useful. Most of the professional learning happens at home, for me. Usually online and when I need to check what I am doing. It’s a pretty private abyss of anxiety for the most part” (P5). Using strong visual language such as “private abyss of anxiety” indicates professional isolation and high levels of stress for teachers who are trying to adjust and adapt to the *AC: E* reform. Teacher participants emphasise the need for “tailored” (P4) professional learning to counter “anxiety” (P5) in noting that “scaffolding [for teachers] is important – the more you know, the more you don’t know” (P6). The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity indicates that timely and regular scaffolding and gradual professional learning is important, and needs to be selected by teachers (Robertson, 2010) according to their needs. This is emphasised by one participant who used language which identifies this crucial need for professional leaning about the *AC: E* so that teachers are able to:

learn it slowly – gradually, I feel like that is good because we can learn it properly. That is the best way to give us a solid grasp of the curriculum. It is fully integrated – for confidence. So that is the way that we have

done it, and I feel happy with that. Slowly, gradually. Quality over the speed of it. (P4)

This teacher participant uses language that explicitly indicates the need for staged or scaffolded learning in their school, showing that it is effective for understanding and utility of the introduced curriculum, and it delineates professional learning as an area sorely needed. One teacher participant supported this in saying:

I think that doing PD on the curriculum yearly would be really helpful, not just doing it here and there. Maybe choosing aspects. I know that we were looking at cross-curriculum priorities and we haven't even touched on that and I don't think that I even want to because I think that people need to understand the strands. Especially with English because they just overlap so much. That's what people find really hard. I find it hard. (P5)

This teacher participant, through the language used, recognises that regular and focused “chosen aspects” for professional learning “would be really helpful”, indicating that useful professional learning opportunities are not happening regularly enough. This teacher participant also reinforces this in saying that they “need to understand the strands” since they and their colleagues “find [it] really hard”. This language in the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity confirms that these issues, including “cross-curriculum priorities” and the “need to understand the strands”, are regarded as important challenges for teachers.

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity further identifies that professional learning could be undertaken independently, but means that access would need to be afforded to all teachers. Teachers identify the inequity of privileged and deprived access to certain resources, which impacts their ability to prepare materials efficiently, and adds to their levels of teacher stress (Jensen et al., 2014). Further, teachers' language indicates that access to professional learning is only of use if the teachers are able to extend or transfer their learning to their

colleagues, a collegial approach, which is dependent on time allocation for teachers (Cole, 2012). One participant notes this as an issue and cites that a lack of time is the reason, because “There is a real lack of sharing and collegial input, especially when we are time poor” (P2).

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity highlights that the reflexive practices of teachers enables teachers to adapt and develop their repertoire under the *AC: E*. Teacher participants suggest a need for the “outsourcing” (P3), or the need for mentoring from external sources to the school site, voicing that “it’d be nice if we did go out to a PD or somebody came in to have that further discussion, to mentor” (P4). Language such as this shows that teachers want assistance with specific *AC: E* tasks, including with their subject planning, and for their professional peace of mind or assurance (Jensen et al., 2014; Rogers, 2002a). Teachers voice explicitly that mentoring would be “a reassurance” (P4) for them, to know that they are implementing the *AC: E* in their classrooms effectively.

Teacher participant language indicates that teachers believe that “someone needs to be out there. There are experienced teachers out there, who we could contact. That would be so useful” (P6). This teacher participant indicates through their use of language, that mentoring from “experienced teachers” is highly sought during and after the implementation of reform as a means of consolidation and improved practise (Hudson & Hudson, 2010).

Another teacher seeking professional reassurance claims that:

It is important with the curriculum that you do revisit the PD where you have experts come in. Otherwise, you don’t know if it is being used effectively to a certain degree. You can see it from your teaching, but no one is actually going through your units to say ‘yes, this is 100% correct or right’. I would welcome somebody to come out and actually check them, because that would be at least you would know that you were on the right track. (P4)

In the role as head of English faculty, this teacher participant reiterates the need for support and direction in teachers' work to align with the curriculum effectively. This teacher participant uses the words "on the right track", to indicate the perspective that teachers require support for their roles and that there are approaches such as mentoring, worth emulating.

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals that superordinate inefficacies are evident in the language of the teacher participants. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals inefficacies, which show a negative or ambivalent perspective of reform for the teacher participants. This causes a resistance to reform (Badugela, 2012; Moyle, 2007; Ostovar-Namaghi, 2011). Despite this, the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity shows that teachers have commitment to continue their practice at their discretion and a willingness and capacity to seek collegial support independently (D'Cruz, Gillingham, & Melendez, 2007).

### **5.1.3 Effect of the Discourses**

This section elaborates on the interconnected issues identified within the language of the teachers, which assist in the exploration of the research aims about teacher perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation and their professional needs surrounding it. This section explores the language of teachers, which describes the difficulties and resolve in their experience of the implementation of new curriculum in Tasmania. It aims to show the position that teachers find themselves in during education reform.

Two dominant discourses have been examined. The Discourse of Conformity and the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity represent the binary positioning of teacher experience during education reform in Tasmanian secondary schools' English classrooms. The Discourse of Conformity identifies the expectations of the *AC: E* mandate and the attempts to comply to these by

teacher participants, despite a “dearth” (P6) of professional support, which provokes dynamic teacher responses in order to cope with changes. The teacher participants’ language shows the reflexive collegial drive or the collegiality that exists in teaching in Tasmania, which supports their cohort both in and outside of their education sectors. Inadequate superordinate stakeholder efficacy and provisions explicitly cause teacher stress and frustration with the implementation. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity identifies the language that teachers use in their attempt to support the implementation of the *AC: E*, and shows professional responses to the challenging reform processes.

There are tensions between superordinate demand for education reform and the apparent professional needs to cope with the implementation of it, particularly for teachers who feel voiceless and unsupported during reform. Teacher participants vocalise feeling “dumbed down” (P2), “never listened to” (P3), and that their work and capital, or teacher agency, “needs to be recognised that [it] is to be valued” (P4). These teacher participants’ perspectives indicate a power-struggle to find acknowledgement of their professional capital when they have a perception of being ignored or disregarded by superordinate stakeholders who continue to expect teachers to comply with the requirements of the *AC: E*.

The two dominant discourses, the Discourse of Conformity and the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity, reveal that the expectation from superordinate stakeholders toward subordinate stakeholders creates a sense of a hierarchical or power-coercive reform culture, where subordinate stakeholders accept having to change, and an expectation of conformity stands (Bennis, Benne, Chin, & Corey, 1976; Olsen & Sexton, 2009; West, 2013). Problematically, however, in this hierarchical top-down, authoritative model, subordinate stakeholders are left feeling unable to resolve pragmatic and professional issues as they appear (Bush, 2011). Teachers reveal a lack of respect for superordinate stakeholder approaches to reform processes.

Superordinate stakeholders possess the authority to dictate the content and implementation of the *AC: E*. This hierarchical order is perceived by the teacher participants as relegating their teaching roles to the undertaking of the orders for the *AC: E* implementation, with haphazard diffusion of information via disseminated or restricted access to few or uncertain curriculum resources, and limited support and feedback opportunities for teachers (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011; Rogers, 2003).

Teacher participants' language indicates their perspective that the order and detail of the *AC: E* implementation by superordinate stakeholders is confused and that they lacked authority despite these superordinate stakeholders trying to wield authority. Teachers voice that the superordinate stakeholders' instruction is perceived to be "as clear as mud" (P3). Teachers find that superordinate authority and control when accompanied by a lack of clarity, is a disempowering, frustrating, and unsettling condition for teachers, causing them to feel unrecognised, voiceless, and lost in the face of reform (Albaker, 2011; Lefstein & Perath, 2014). In trying to conform with mandate but without support, teachers feel professionally disenfranchised and disempowered, as Participant 2 states in the interview:

I think that when things are directed to you – that disempowers you, substantially. See, my colleagues and I were asked about – what about criteria? But even then, their work was disregarded so, we didn't sit down and have a meeting to work out how we as teachers are going to look at this curriculum. It was just a directive that was given – this is what it is. So that makes it really very hard. There's a lot of tension, there's a lot of... It's just that they had a timeline, that's what they did to control it, that's now what we have to live with.

Teacher participants feel that as frontline stakeholders they know best as to what should be included or changed to support both themselves as professionals and

the students in their care (Nielsen, Triggs, Clarke, & Collins, 2010). However, the teacher participants feel dictated to and professionally disregarded or “undervalued” (P2), where the teacher participants perceive that “It doesn’t seem as though we’re being viewed or valued as professionals at this point in time in the way that [the *AC: E* implementation] is being handled” (P2). Participant 2 expresses a lack of clarity of information, communication, resources and acknowledgement or follow-up of teacher opinion both externally and internally (Bush, 2011; Louis & Kruse, 1995; Richardson, 2003). One teacher participant says that, “I don’t think that we’ve been bombarded with opportunities for *Australian Curriculum* focused PL [professional learning]” (P1), indicating a lack of knowledge to empower teachers in the *AC: E* implementation, but also the need for greater reform support for teachers.

The dominant discourses show that the respect for and acknowledgement of teachers’ professional opinions is regarded by teachers as an act of equity and support (Rogers, 2002a; Vähäsantanen, 2015). Teacher participant language shows that without acknowledgement that teachers’ professional opinion or expertise can inform education reform, then the teachers are not effectively included in the reform process (Donnell & Gettinger, 2015). One teacher participant reflects this in saying:

You go into a meeting and you have no power whatsoever. You can only say yes or no. That’s all you can say. You are powerless. You have no authority. There isn’t recognition of the quality of work that you do, or that you would like to do or would like to be able to enact. (P2)

This participant uses negative descriptions of feeling excluded and professionally “powerless” and as not recognised for the professional capital that could be accessed by teacher colleagues and superordinates.

The dominant discourses reveal that there is a need for superordinate stakeholders to maintain a degree of guidance and control, or the direction of

reform is lost (Bush, 2011). This is a notion supported by teacher participants who were also English faculty leaders or internal superordinates. The faculty leaders who supported the need to explicitly direct colleagues, intended to appease or reduce workload for their colleague teachers with simple instruction, to implement the demands of the *AC: E*. However, these faculty leaders simultaneously and forcefully expressed their own concern for inadequate acknowledgement of teacher feedback and access to stakeholder consultation or negotiation processes (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011; Williamson & Gardner, 2015) that impact teaching practice (Alshammari, 2013; Huizinga, Handelzalts, Nieveen, & Voogt, 2014). One teacher participant's language indicates that they themselves require additional support and professional learning to "get their head around" (P5) the curriculum to feel confident in their instruction for and support of their colleagues, to be prepared for the required changes of the curriculum mandate (Williamson & Gardner, 2015). The discourses reveal that a contradictory positioning of English faculty leaders results in an ambivalent regard toward the reform, citing stress in having to direct their colleagues whilst trying to comprehend, plan, and implement the changes themselves. One teacher participant and head of their school's English faculty, points to this in saying that "[I'm] still getting my head around it. I find it hard – I kind of just say yes that I will fix an issue – that was one of my goals that I have to work on; my leadership skills" (P5). This teacher participant further emphasises their precarious position with the pressure to conform despite uncertainty of the difficult *AC: E* content whilst trying to "work on; [-] leadership skills" to direct colleagues under the *AC: E*.

Participants believe that their opinions were "lost" (P2 and P8) in the implementation process, indicating that teachers feel that they still need to be supported, including being heard, to address their needs (Donnell & Gettinger, 2015; Joyce & Showers, 2002). One teacher participant painstakingly emphasises



feeling lost with a lack of confidence amongst colleagues in their knowledge of the *AC: E*, due to a lack of support:

there's all this really negative 'um, I don't know', 'oh, it's not really good', 'Oh I don't know the curriculum really well'. There's all that kind of language that goes on when we start to connect the ideas and teaching resources to the curriculum. No-one wants to come out with lots of confidence and say 'I've got this new ACE learning sequence for grade ten', because they're still so unsure what it should look like. (P1)

Newer teachers are less likely to feel confident with *AC: E* terminologies than more experienced teachers. Newer teachers reported difficulty with the *AC: E* content, especially with a return to grammar not familiar to the newer teacher participants (Jones & Chen, 2012). One teacher participant cites, "I didn't even know what made up a simple sentence. I was using all of these things without even knowing! Now we need to be aware of what they are and the students need to be able to identify it" (P4). However, despite issues of a lack of content knowledge and access to differentiated, tailored, and applicable resources for teachers to remedy this, superordinate stakeholders maintained an implementation timeline and directed teachers to continue to invest their energy into the pragmatic operation of the *AC: E* (Donnell & Gettinger, 2015) to ensure implementation of the new curriculum. Conflict resides here as supported by the language of a teacher participant who notes the rushed nature of the *AC: E*'s implementation:

There was the opportunity to give feedback on the curriculum during the drafting stages. So we did that informally in some English team meetings, but again without devoting hours looking at the document it's a bit of an overwhelming thing to do quickly, to give feedback. (P1).

This lack of capacity to effectively review the *AC: E* and submit feedback leaves teachers without ample opportunity to be included in reform negotiations.

Limited feedback opportunities are available. Participant 1 identified above, notes

that there was insufficient time availability to devote hours to it, hence removing opportunity to voice concerns about the *AC: E* among colleagues, or to superordinate stakeholders.

The management of the *AC: E* implementation was handed to local or internal superordinate stakeholders, causing confusion and chaos for some stakeholders. This presented hope of fluid local implementation but was not perceived as efficacious or equitable by participants. One teacher participant comments that “we [teachers] have lost the importance, the trust in leadership. We’ve lost the trust, not so much from the system, but lost trust in the process, what are we doing this for?” (P2). Participants can see through the façade of greater local control of resources and direction by internal superordinate stakeholders, and they note this as a lack of regard for and loss of trust in teachers’ agency (Trent, 2015), causing teachers to then distrust superordinate stakeholders and the reform “process”.

Perspectives of trust or teacher agency were a major influence on teacher opinion of the *AC: E* which impacted teacher integrity and identity and highlight specific professional needs to address such impact (Buchanan, 2012; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015; Vähäsantanen, 2015). While teacher participants were expected to implement the *AC: E* in their classrooms, their self-efficacy appeared to be reduced, as indicated through comments that they thought the *AC: E* to be “difficult” (P6), “hard” (P5), “convoluted” (P2 and P4), “too wordy” (P8), “tedious” (P6), “time consuming” (P4 and P5), “confusing” (P1), “unrealistic” (P7), and “excessive” (P3) in nature. This is reinforced by teacher participants in their data, and the researcher’s consideration of extant texts, highlighting the “dearth” (P6) of relevant resources. The *AC: E* resources are perceived necessary by participants such as school principals and subject faculty leaders, who are concomitantly dependent on a range of contextual structural variables including funding (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2009).

The encouragement for teachers to access professional learning struck anxiety for a number of participants. One teacher participant claims that “Nobody could really spare the time to help me – everyone had big workloads and I didn’t want to stress other staff, or to appear incompetent” (P6). This teacher participant indicates two issues; that colleagues (teachers) are stretched for time where “everyone had big workloads”. This participant was fearful for “appear[ing] incompetent”. The notion of asking for assistance is perceived to be an admission to colleagues including internal superordinates, that they are not professionally capable as English teachers or could not manage the workload intensification (Barton et al., 2014; Keogh, Garvis, Pendergast, & Diamond, 2012). Another teacher participant note that “it is a bit demoralising and intimidating to have someone watch you. It is very stressful” (P4), indicating a common perspective that asking for assistance is “intimidating”. Anxiety in seeking assistance is regarded by the teacher participants as a risk-factor for their concept of teacher autonomy, ability and for their ongoing employment through judgement and reduced teacher agency (Easthope & Easthope, 2007; Lasky, 2005).

Participants cite the need for mentoring during and after reform to ameliorate these anxieties about workload intensification and to create a more sustainable professional culture (Harding & Parsons, 2011). Teacher participants note that “mentoring; it [positive and negative feedback] is exactly as what we do with the students where you tell them what they could change to reassure you that you are doing it correctly” (P5). This teacher participant notes that “mentoring [...] reassure[s]” through professional review for greater confidence. Another teacher participant reiterates this in saying that, “It’s a great idea to let teachers know if they are doing a good job or not” (P4). Mentoring assists with provision of focused and discrete professional development, tailored to address a range of pragmatic and intrinsic needs (Phillips, 2008). One teacher participant articulates the value of supporting teachers, but noted tensions in their experience:

if you've employed a teacher because they are competent and they have skills that you would like to see developed, why would you want to devalue that? Why wouldn't you want to encourage that to go through and give them more skills? Because the more skills that they have, the better teaching and learning, the better outcomes that they would have for the school. There is a lot of jealousy, and there are people who want to hang on to their ivory towers because they want to control, and they don't want to see people become the best that they can be. They want to squash them, because they don't want someone to become better than them, or having more knowledge or understanding – somehow this is seen to be a negative. People feel threatened when you want to know more about their practice. Their process. (P2).

This teacher participant's comment explicates the perspective that where collegial relationships are frayed, seeking support is difficult. This participant perceives their superordinate stakeholders experience "jealousy" of teachers' desire for knowledge and "feel threatened" by questioning "their practice. Their process", and so "devalue[d]" or restricted teacher access to professional learning. These comments assert and reinforce participants' comments about feeling "unsupported" (P1) and "undervalued" (P3). Participant 1 and Participant 3's language indicates the common perspective amongst teacher participants that superordinate stakeholders are also lacking knowledge of the AC: *E*, which points to the limited clarity of information about the AC: *E* and reform implementation (Moss, 2013), where subject content knowledge impacts teacher confidence in their practice.

Experienced and permanent teachers who question leadership during reform show that control and agency for teachers is highlighted as an area privileged to those who can afford a political voice through anchored confidence

in job permanency. Conflict between stakeholders also reveals an element of disregard for teacher agency or capacity to make informed teaching decisions, challenging power and ideologies of demand, control, supply, and surveillance by superordinate stakeholders through passive and determined resistance (Soja, 1996). Experienced teachers consider that the lack of superordinate support for them to provide mentoring for newer teachers is an element of constrained or reduced teacher agency. Teacher language identifies their serious concerns about a lack support for teachers during reform through an inability to share resources or knowledge through school or sector resource deficiencies. The language of teachers recognises that despite raising their concerns about the AC: E reform, they are not heard or recognised by their superordinates. Participant 2 says that teachers are “saying the same thing consistently that we would like time, and that we would like to support each other, and that we would like to be viewed in a more professional way and be regarded more as professionals”. This teacher participant’s comment that they “would like [...] time [...] support [...] and [to] be regarded more as professionals”, shows that they feel unsupported and lack teacher agency. This adds to the teacher participants’ negative opinion that superordinate control of stakeholders is prominent and shows a distrust for teacher capacity or agency dependent on the culture of the school despite the clear need for support (Barton et al., 2014; Dilkes et al., 2014). The discourses reveal that collaborative efforts between stakeholders is vital to empower teachers (Rogers, 2015; Stack et al., 2011). Further, the collaborative approach not only supports teachers, but also fosters effective reform processes and transfer of essential professional knowledge (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014b; Cole, 2012; Kidd, Brown, & Fitzallen, 2015; Moss, 2013).

Participants identify school and sectoral culture as impacting communication, stalling progress, or impacting teacher stress and agency (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015). The need for greater communication and improved

teacher agency remains a common pattern throughout the data, with teachers saying that:

The process and tensions that have risen out of the process, in the workplace have been [the] issues. The AC itself is to try to make it much more transparent across the system. Well the intention was. Unless you're going to be more specific, like in science or maths – that's fine. In restrictions, they feel confined as well. (P5).

This participant indicates that there are “tensions that have risen out of the process” of the implementation of the AC: *E*, because teachers perceive the AC: *E* implementation as “unspecific”, causing conflict through confusion of the “convoluted” (P4) content. Where collegial relationships are strained, higher stress surrounding implementation of reform (Rogers, 2002b) such as the AC: *E* exists. The language of several of the participants suggests that, these tensions result in a resistance toward change, with one teacher saying that they would have to end up “[doing none] of this, throwing everything out and starting from scratch, or doing something really radical” (P1), to cope with workload changes and stress. Newer, contracted and limited tenure teacher participants show the opposite, revealing fear of retribution (Keogh et al., 2012) if they did not conform, despite the recognised lack of support. This is explicitly indicated by one teacher:

You feel the need to know it all – you feel terrified to ask questions which might reveal that you don't know something – risking looking incompetent. This is where you start outsourcing advice. I am lucky because I have a permanent job, but there is still that fear of reputation. (P3)

This teacher shows anxiety and stress, feeling “terrified” about accessing assistance despite the professional imbalance between superordinate and subordinate accountabilities. Another experienced teacher claims that they feel

vulnerable to the reform accountabilities amidst general layers of workload stress:

It's like you're walking on eggshells because you have got to be careful because you have to say exactly the right thing, heard exactly the right way that you intended. And then there's everything else on top that people expect. Respect. Workplace bullying – which is a huge problem. On top of that, the bureaucrats want to review you. (P2)

This language indicates a clear concern for teachers to comply with reform requirements, adding to the body of the Discourse of Conformity.

These tensions are important to explore in order to provide a view of the reform climate in English classrooms of Tasmanian secondary schools. In providing review of these tensions, it can be seen that there are unresolved or ongoing issues. The purpose in detailing dominant issues found in the studied context, enables decisions or approaches to be made by relevant stakeholders in future applicable scenarios (Trent, 2015). Through this, there is opportunity for transformation and professional empowerment for superordinate and subordinate stakeholders who are key to successful education innovation (Balkar, 2015; Tomlinson, 2004).

## **5.2 Implications of the Discourses**

Teacher experiences of curriculum reform processes have been identified in the exploration of the two dominant discourses of Conformity and Teacher Reflexivity. The interconnected discursive tensions reveal unresolved issues for English teacher participants in the Tasmanian secondary schools in this research. Within the identified Discourses of Conformity and Teacher Reflexivity, specific and contextualised issues relating to resources and provisions that support the implementation of the *AC:E* for teachers, decision-making, teacher agency, and stress have been identified as issues of interest for the broader education

stakeholders concerned with education reform processes and sustainability of innovation (Tuinamuana, 2011). This section discusses the impact of the issues within the discourses, and their connection to teacher practice.

### **5.2.1 Implications of the Discourse of Conformity**

Over time, in conforming to mandate and allowing implementation of education reform to proceed despite deficiencies, there is opportunity to both integrate the successful aspects and to identify and resolve or attempt to improve the less successful or less beneficial elements (Foucault, 1990). When key stakeholders such as teachers identify positive and negative elements of reform, they become prominent in the opportunity to establish conversation for localised and wider interrogation of reform processes among stakeholders (Evers & Kneyber, 2016). Participant 4 suggests that a positive aspect of the AC: *E* in their school, is that they held some teacher agency in their practice in noting that:

The good thing about English is that it is not really very prescriptive in that you must do that, this and the other. Yet it is for other subjects. Yet for English there is still quite a bit of scope about what texts you can include and what you're actually going to do with that text. I feel that we still have a lot of freedom. You are still able to still navigate and negotiate and have poetry, creative writing, have you know – genre writing in there and it still fits in the AC quite well – quite seamless.

In acknowledgement of positive aspects of reform processes, stakeholders are able to assert their perspectives of change and to shift professional energy to acknowledge and resolve perceived tensions.

Crucially, through the reading of the Discourse of Conformity and identification of problematic elements within it, stakeholders are afforded recognition of the collective, if not official, goal of efficient implementation and maintenance of reform. If reform processes are met with support for improved



professional attitudes, teacher ability, and flexibility, reduced attrition of teachers' professional agency (Bush, 2011; Foucault, 1988; MacDonald et al., 2016) will be encouraged. This discourse indicates teachers' progressive and approachable perspectives for reform processes.

The Discourse of Conformity provides assurance to broader stakeholders that implementation for the betterment of education standards is facilitated and moderated by teachers. Respect for teacher agency assures teachers in their roles and knowledge for, in, and of practice, with awareness for the end goal of student learning. If teachers are prepared for practice under the new curriculum, conforming to the demands of mandate to teach to a new curriculum, also theoretically aligns content for students (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), 2010). However, this is where conflict emerges (Rowan & Bigum, 2012).

If stakeholders are to consider superordinate stakeholders of reform are considered accountable to also conform with their own mandate by responsibly addressing curriculum reform needs, then solutions would be found in the provision of accessible and focused professional support, including transparent and more effective communication channels to alleviate anxieties and gaps in professional knowledge (Kidd et al., 2015; Rogers, 2002a). However and as agreed in the discourses of this research, Rowan (2012a) suggests that in education:

Access is not truly equal. Focusing on issues of access – and the multiple ways in which access is limited – is thus an important part of any reform agenda. It draws attention to both the deliberate and accidental ways through which we shape who can participate in particular places and spaces. (pp. 51-52)

The Discourse of Conformity and the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reflect a dire situation in educational reform, where access to knowledge and resources

remains an issue for teachers, which impacts teacher perspectives of educational reform and their practice.

Adequate support to enable effective teacher practice would allow stakeholders to readily and more seamlessly address the relationship between education mandate and resource supplies for greater system and teacher efficacy (Papatraianou & Le Cornu, 2014). By maintaining supports for teachers during reform, education change would become firmly embedded and gradually improved upon, rather than dismissed by stakeholders or repeating itself in a constant cycle of unsupported innovation (Reid & Kleinhenz, 2015; Rowan & Bigum, 2012; Rowan & Honan, 2005).

Through the Discourse of Conformity, teacher voice would be accepted and valued during reform. Emphasising education reform challenges for teachers in this discourse, stakeholders can reject the notion of teachers as the “end-point of educational reform – the last to hear, the last to know, the last to speak. [...] mainly the objects of reform, not its participants” (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2011, p. 1). Through highlighting reform challenges for educators, teachers will become vital stakeholders in education decision making including for their own practice whilst sustaining professional and progressive discussion with authority (MacDonald et al., 2016; Rowan & Bigum, 2012). This is a transformational approach, echoed in the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity.

### **5.2.2 Implications of the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity**

Teachers are known for their adaptable and accommodating personalities (Mariana, Fabiana, & Andreea, 2016). They are not the end-point of political or reform agendas. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity highlights teacher capital, capacity and strength in adversity during reform.

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity challenges the Discourse of Conformity as participants have indicated how they have dealt with difficult or frustrating circumstances during the implementation of the *AC: E* in their Tasmanian secondary schools. By explicating how teacher participants have resolved or managed emergent or hegemonic and pragmatic issues, this discourse highlights both reflexive strategies employed by teachers and where there is need for attention to the gaps that teachers have had to creatively, diplomatically, and sometimes, stressfully remedy. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity theoretically indicates the pragmatic relationship between demand and supply for implementation of the *AC: E*. This is done by teachers filling the void and addressing reform requirements through their professional agency. The discourse reveals that stakeholders should listen to and negotiate with teachers, particularly during reform if it is to be successful (Silins & Mulford, 2005).

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals that teachers are capable of adjusting and differentiating their practice according to the dynamics of their classrooms and accountabilities. The discourse shows that dynamic or flexible approaches to teaching can be stressful yet they are vital in response to fulfilling immediate and broader needs. The discourse indicates that solutions to professional needs require high-level adaptability and coping strategies. The discourse reveals that the resilience, self-efficacy, and agency of teachers are challenged, leaving individuals searching for support, particularly when faced with change and insufficient provisions for education reform.

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity shows that with a lack of teacher pedagogical content knowledge, teachers experience additional workload stress to fill knowledge shortcomings, in addition to regular teaching commitments. The added stress for teachers to cope causes frustration, attrition, distrust, and negative response toward demand and reform (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2015). The discourse reveals that performance anxiety surrounding Teacher Standards that

were developed and implemented by AITSL (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2014d) add to teacher attrition and fear of professional judgement, particularly for newer or limited tenure teachers (Buchanan et al., 2013). This fear was present in participants' responses because of the limited supply of relevant resources and in-service professional development to work effectively with reform changes. The discourse indicates the importance of addressing these issues by seeking collegial or external support, without perception of collegial or superordinate judgement, with leniency or acceptance of teachers as professionals requiring occasional remedial or consultative support, as in any other profession (Cole, 2012). The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity reveals a need for greater teacher agency. One teacher notes, "it needs staff to be part of the process, not told what to do" (P2).

### **5.3 Silences in the Discourses**

Silences in the discourses are significant (Ephratt, 2008). Explication of silences in the discourses reveal hidden and valid issues behind the more explicit concerns raised by teacher participants, interpreted by the researcher. This section explores the silences in the two dominant discourses. These silences further highlight what was explicitly told in the confirmed discourses.

Silences or absences in the Discourse of Conformity are located through identification by the few participants who indicated high conformity, and acceptance or satisfaction with the *AC: E* implementation. This was found through dissatisfied perspectives of the *AC: E* and its implementation but show that there are some successful reform processes occurring in the Tasmanian education sectors. One teacher participant says that "There is support in our school, from our Principal, obviously from the top – he is really supportive and really great" (P4). This rare perspective shows that education reform can be

successful for teachers if they are supported through it. This highlights the teacher claims that they require increase in *AC: E* provisions for practice, and improved leadership for effective reform.

In the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity, silences are revealed to the researcher in teacher participant comments regarding how they had demonstrated resilience whilst under the pressure of reform. Underlying the translation of the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity, is the effort required by teacher participants to employ curriculum changes and find their way through reform despite inadequate support.

A significant silence in the Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity is the lack of support for teacher agency by superordinates, as a means for implementation expediency and conflict avoidance between stakeholders. This is a highly problematic aspect of the discourse, as it impacts teacher agency through perceived lack of recognition of teacher capabilities and experience as key stakeholders (Jones, 2009). Further, behind the discourse is the overriding teacher ethos of prioritising work for students rather than superordinates through the unsupported translation and differentiation of curriculum resources to suit their students' needs (Rowan & Bigum, 2012).

The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity uncovers the professionalism and skills that hold teachers together as a professional cohort. This discourse shows that reform is better achieved with collegial support, which demands respect and support for teachers' freedom of curriculum delivery. In presenting and utilising teacher perspectives and needs during and after reform, teachers will be empowered through their inclusion, to improve both their practice and continued application of progressive change in education. The Discourse of Teacher Reflexivity silences reinforce that there is a lack of leadership, teacher inclusivity and support for teachers during reform where teachers are working harder and with little to no support, even during reform.

## **5.4 Conclusion of the critical discourse analysis**

The employment of a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1985, 2001a) through the use of a constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) underpinned by poststructural feminist theory (Foucault, 2003; Lazar, 2005; Weedon, 1997), enables teacher perspectives of their agency and needs during educational reform to be explored. The critical discourse analysis facilitates a discussion of reform processes, challenging the impact of reform for broader education stakeholders. The critical discourse analysis provides insight into commonly found challenges for teachers during reform (Lazar, Edwards, & McMillon, 2012; Wetherell et al., 2001).

## Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

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### 6.0 Introduction

This qualitative research has examined the perspectives and needs of Tasmanian secondary school English subject teachers during the implementation of the national *Australian Curriculum*. It has explored teacher participants' impressions of and responses to the *AC: E* implementation. The explication of disparities between education mandate and reform provisions creates awareness for future exploration of issues surrounding education reform processes. This final stage of analysis resulted in a theorising of the constructs that reconstitute the discourses of curriculum reform from the perspectives of teachers. The findings of this research and the recommendations made in this chapter will lead to improved professional support and greater collaboration between education stakeholders.

This research, informed by poststructural feminist theory, explores and summarises the two major research aims. This chapter summarises the main research findings through the exploration of the two research aims. The approaches used are transparent and rigorous (Hiller, 1998; Lazar, 2005). The analysis of the questionnaire and interview transcript data was central to the research. Extant text data was used to support the analysis. The teacher participant experiences during the *AC: E* implementation in Tasmanian secondary schools provide rich information, which results in findings that provide a snapshot of reform in a Tasmanian context.

This chapter is structured in four sections. Section 6.1 provides an overview of the research. Section 6.2 outlines the research aims and discusses the results that address them through analysis of the discourses. Section 6.3

presents the research recommendations and future research suggestions. Finally, section 6.4 discusses the research contribution of this study for an understanding of the professional development needs of teachers during the implementation of new secondary school English curriculum.

## 6.1 Research Overview

This research explored qualified practising Tasmanian secondary English subject teachers' perspectives of the implementation of the *AC: E* to identify the support and professional development that was required.

The two main aims of this research were to:

- i) Investigate practising English teachers' perspectives of implementation processes associated with the implementation of the *AC: E*
- ii) Identify areas of pragmatic support and professional development for practising Secondary English teachers in Tasmania.

In addressing these two main aims, the research critically explored the wider issues relating to teaching practice during educational reform.

The researcher sought teachers' responses to the implementation of the *AC: E* from all Tasmanian education sectors. Teachers answered a questionnaire and then participated in an individual, semi-structured interview with the researcher. The questionnaire and interview data were qualitatively analysed for teacher perspectives of and needs for the *AC: E* reform in a Tasmanian context. These strategies allowed the researcher to address the two research aims and the focus of the research.

The qualitative methodology of this research was iterative and transparent. The research data were analysed using the rigorous combination of



the data analysis methods of constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) and a critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2013b; Hiller, 1998; Kress, 1985) through a poststructural feminist lens (Weedon, 1997). The critical discourse analysis enabled the examination of significant perspectives (Lazar, 2005) of Tasmanian teachers during education reform.

The research aims were addressed through the examination of two dominant discourses, which were constructed from the five themes identified through the coding analysis processes shown in chapters four and five of this thesis. The dominant discourses identified important and interconnected aspects of implementation processes that effected teacher practice. Research Aim One, Perspectives of Reform, revealed issues of *AC: E* resourcing, time pressures and teacher agency. Research Aim Two, Needs for Reform, found issues of inequitable resource provision, access to professional learning and mentoring.

## **6.2 Key Findings**

This section explores the key findings found through the use of a critical discourse analysis which addressed the two research aims of the thesis. The findings provided valuable insight to educational reform processes in Tasmanian secondary schools.

### **6.2.1 Research Aim One – Perspectives of reform**

Research Aim One examined practising Tasmanian secondary school English teachers' perspectives of the processes used in the implementation of the *AC: E*, in their schools. This research explored the issues identified in the two dominant discourses Conformity and Teacher Reflexivity and the challenges raised by teachers for reform. The key aspects that teachers perceived to

influence their practice were issues of *AC: E* resourcing, time pressures and teacher agency.

#### **6.2.1.1 Reform and Resourcing**

The resourcing of reform was an issue found in this research, which was linked to professional practice and equity. The discourses showed that teachers were concerned about the level of availability of suitable *AC: E* resources. These concerns included the availability of resources designed to assist teachers with their pedagogical content knowledge, the availability of assessment and reporting materials, and the control of resource access. The research identified that the distribution of resources was an area that required improvement. There was a view that teachers in some educational sectors had exclusive or privileged professional support. The findings showed teacher concern for issues of clarity regarding directives and roles of authority that included access to information within official *AC: E* documents. This was supported by consideration of the available *AC: E* extant texts for teachers.

The dominant discourses revealed that ambiguous directives for the *AC: E* implementation did not support the teacher participants through the curriculum reform. Teacher participants attempted to implement the *AC: E* with the documents that were provided by superordinate stakeholders. The teacher participants in the research used but did not attempt to interpret or improve the suggestions in the *AC: E* documents. The discourses revealed that the teacher participants found that the *AC: E* materials provided to teachers lacked clarity and that this lack of clarity impacted on subject preparation and planning for teachers. The *AC: E* related material lacked transparency. As a result, issues of inadequate resources also impacted on teacher workload, teacher self-efficacy and agency. The two dominant discourses indicated that the teachers did not feel confident to

implement the *AC: E*. Research Aim Two identified a need for specific, tailored professional learning.

The dominant discourses revealed significant concern for the delivery and assessment of the *AC: E* content. Teacher confusion about understanding *AC: E* assessment levels raised issues of education equity for teachers and students. The data indicated the teachers' reasonable expectation for support to meet requirements of the demands of the *AC: E* mandate were inadequate. Whilst some teacher participants felt partially supported, other teacher participants felt excluded and disrespected through the lack of available *AC: E* resources. This was supported by the review of *AC: E* implementation documents, where there was restricted access to some resources between education sectors, an issue related to teacher self-efficacy and agency.

The dominant discourses demonstrated teachers' frustration about developing and using their professional capacity. This resulted in confusion about the reform processes and an ambivalent or compliant attitude towards the *AC: E*. Despite the trials faced by the teacher participants in adjusting to the *AC: E*, the dominant discourses revealed that any additional professional learning to assist with the implementation of the *AC: E*, was viewed positively by teachers as a result of the reform. Overall, the dominant discourses acknowledged that the implementation of the *AC: E* curriculum was a demanding reform. However, teacher participants felt unsupported during the implementation of the *AC: E* in their schools. The dominant discourses acknowledged that a lack of reasonable professional provisions affected a smooth and supported curriculum transition for teachers.

The dominant discourses revealed teacher caution regarding the content of the *AC: E* and its implementation. Teachers questioned the current *Australian Curriculum* reform processes by superordinate stakeholders. The dominant discourses clearly identified a highly problematic deficit between superordinate

demand on teachers and the supply of resources or infrastructure for it.

### **6.2.1.2 Time Pressures**

The findings indicated that time pressures for teachers impacted upon the implementation of the *AC: E*. This finding related to teacher workload stress. This was evident in the amount of additional effort and time taken to learn, adapt, and implement particular aspects of the *AC: E*, particularly where teachers could not access *AC: E* resources or assistance. The dominant discourses identified the need for teachers to understand curriculum detail in limited amounts of time amidst other teaching pressures. Teacher participants made clear that they had to painstakingly sift through *AC: E* materials, often independently, to construct decipherable, more accessible and applicable materials for their English faculty staff or colleagues to share. Teacher participants indicated that the use of private time to create suitable learning materials for the *AC: E* in their classrooms made the implementation more difficult. The dominant discourses revealed that inadequate resources and time constraints resulted in teacher concern or anxiety for their ability to grasp the terminology of the *AC: E* satisfactorily for their practice. Lack of preparation and professional learning time for teacher participants to navigate the *AC: E* created vulnerable and stressed responses to reform, particularly in regards to appropriate preparation for practice and delivery to students. The issue of time availability for teachers' subject preparation and professional learning was recognised in the dominant discourses, as an element of teaching practice that must be considered part of the teacher workload.

Increased workload in order to implement the *AC: E* reform effectively was an important and problematic finding in the dominant discourses. The dominant discourses revealed that the limited amount of time for teachers to adjust to the *AC: E*, impacted teacher perspective of reform efficacy,

management, and respect for teachers as professionals. This is an important finding as it provides evidence for education stakeholders that teachers must be supported with appropriate pragmatic provision and efficacy in order to facilitate reform.

The research indicated a possible financial deficit in Tasmanian education where teachers are not afforded reasonable time release to meet their teaching commitments, effectively. The research indicated the need for gradual and supported implementation of reform to assist in managing teacher workload and change. Time was considered as a resource by teacher participants and is recognised as an essential need for efficacious professional support during and after reform. The pressure on teachers to fully comprehend and incorporate the *AC: E* without sufficient time provision, resulted in cynical and stressful compliance to the demands and the expectations of the *AC: E* mandate.

### **6.2.1.3 Teacher agency**

No teacher participants acknowledged that there had been collaboration during this *AC: E* implementation, despite the fact that it was claimed by Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) (2013), that teachers from across Tasmania were invited to share their resources and curriculum knowledge. The dominant discourses revealed that there were varied responses to the question of participants' perceived level of their teacher agency during the *AC: E* implementation process. The dominant discourses revealed that the teacher participants' perspectives of their agency was influenced by a lack of respect and transparent reform processes and support. Participants identified concern about their sense of professional worth affecting their sense of teacher agency. The dominant discourses identified that issues regarding the tone of superordinate directives, equitable resource access and professional collegiality between stakeholders, influenced teachers' sense of agency.

The research found that teachers perceive their voice as crucial to reform, since teachers are key stakeholders in education. The dominant discourses indicated strongly that teachers wanted to be involved in the reform process with greater ability to provide feedback that is recognised by superordinate stakeholders. Lack of consultation led to the research participants feeling professionally devalued and excluded from the education reform process. The Discourse of Conformity, which speaks of professional compliance, suggested that teachers must be able to voice their opinion through official lines of communication without fear of retribution. The dominant discourses revealed that recognising constructive teacher criticisms would facilitate appropriate practical approaches to assist educational reform and the development of teacher pedagogical content knowledge required for it. The dominant discourses found that an absence of professional acknowledgement for teacher work and skill-sets provoked negative responses in teachers toward reform.

The dominant discourses have shown that teachers felt disregarded and unassisted during the curriculum reform. To mitigate this, teachers sought additional help during their own personal time and at their own cost, out of desperation and professional obligation and integrity, to support themselves and others professionally.

This research found that a national or unified approach to education reform is not happening in Tasmanian secondary schools. The dominant discourses showed that there was a lack of regard for teachers' practice, when directives were given and not negotiated. The research found that inflexible demands on teachers to comply with educational reform were professionally disempowering, limit professional practice, and were not respectful or conducive to progressive teaching innovation.

The dominant discourses revealed that hierarchical reform processes through demands on teachers to implement the *AC: E* were designed to meet

accountabilities set by external agencies or governing bodies. This meant that teacher agency was relegated to implementing the AC: *E*, creating a situation in schools where the physical implementation was considered more important than improving teacher knowledge or practices. The dominant discourses revealed that educational reform processes that do not support teachers' intrinsic motivation or practice do not support educational reform.

The dominant discourses showed that the support of colleagues is vital to facilitate reform. The dominant discourses clearly revealed that a lack of effective communication and support reduced professional regard for teachers during reform.

The discourses discovered that teachers require increased collegial interaction. The dominant discourses indicated that the teachers expect professional collegiality, which includes the sharing of resources and unrestricted professional communication. Ignoring this aspect of teacher agency results in the substantial disempowerment of teachers since it reduces or removes professional freedom to share resources collaboratively. Funding discrepancies and limitations for access to resources also impacts on teacher agency.

The dominant discourses revealed that teachers want to be more involved in reform. Teachers want to feel respected, informed and instrumental in effecting positive change between stakeholders including their colleagues through use of their knowledge and experience, rather than feeling frustrated with an unsatisfied and derisive view of reform or feeling professionally excluded and undervalued. The importance of ensuring relevant professional provisions that enable reform through collegial or collaborative discussion, should be supported by the facilitation of mutual valuing or responsibility for empowering teacher development.

The dominant discourses conveyed that teacher agency through collegial interaction empowered some teachers. The research indicated that teacher self-

efficacy and confidence in the reform process was crucial. This is in stark contrast to the teachers who felt disempowered through fear of losing credibility if they sought out-of-sector professional assistance for working with the *AC: E*. The added stress about job security and job performance impacted on teacher agency.

The dominant discourses revealed that educational reform in decision-making processes for the implementation of educational change should promote teacher agency. The discourses showed that teachers recognised that their inclusion in reform processes is vital, and that teachers should not be positioned as voiceless in the development and implementation of new curriculum.

The dominant discourses revealed that the teachers identified issues concerning pedagogical support and curriculum design involvement, which, if effective, would assist teachers in their readiness for their responsibilities to implement educational change.

The dominant discourses identified the need to promote teacher inclusion in education reform processes. The discourses revealed the necessity for greater recognition of teacher knowledge and experience for best educational practice. The dominant discourses showed that a lack of teacher inclusion in reform negotiations, demonstrates a continued degree of breakdown in stakeholder communication and inclusive practices.

#### **6.2.1.4 Summary of Research Aim One**

Research Aim One explored issues associated with the *AC: E* implementation, which included reform resourcing, time pressures and teacher agency. Teacher perspectives of the *AC: E* implementation processes in regard to teacher practice were acknowledged. The dominant discourses showed that teacher practice was impacted by the lack of support. The discourses revealed,



too, that teachers perceived that there had not been enough time or support to allow for smooth *AC: E* implementation. These aspects added to workload stress and impacted on teachers' perspectives of self-efficacy. Lack of provisions for teachers who did their best to meet mandate requirements created professional tensions and apprehension toward curriculum reform. This impacted the teachers' uptake of the mandated curriculum changes.

The dominant discourses revealed that teachers perceived a reduced quality of leadership and support in comparison to previous curriculum reforms in Tasmania. The reduced support did not encourage participants to adopt the *AC: E*. This showed in participants' assertions of viewing the *AC: E* as another education reform that will be quickly replaced with new curriculum innovation, indicating reform weariness and distrust in superordinate stakeholders and their motivations for reform.

The research showed that ambivalent and negative perspectives of reform were caused by a lack of access to resources including funding, time, implementation information including the clarity of the information, planning, and assessment materials and to personable or collegial resources such as collaboration and transparent communication. The dominant discourses revealed that whilst one education sector found implementation to be reasonable, participants from the other two education sectors felt that the responsibility for reform fell on teachers' shoulders due to a lack of superordinate transparency and support. United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (2014b) clearly states that teachers cannot be expected to undertake reform with inadequate support. The inadequacies identified in the dominant discourses caused feelings of frustration and disappointment in the reform processes. The dominant discourses suggested that teacher input during reform would enable and sustain a successful curriculum that is strengthened through teacher knowledge about what works best in schools for teacher practice.

## **6.2.2 Research Aim Two – Needs for reform**

Research Aim Two explored teachers' perceived requirements for educational reform. The main areas of need that were raised by teacher participants, included the need for equitable provision of resources that would enable higher self-efficacy and practice for teacher agency, the need for focused professional learning, and the need for mentoring and sustained support through professional learning and planning review. These elements mirror the discussion of the first research aim and are identified in the two dominant discourses of Conformity and Teacher Reflexivity.

### **6.2.2.1 *Equitable resource provision and accessibility***

The dominant discourses showed that teachers recognise the importance of equitable resource provision and access to relevant and useful *AC: E* documents or professional learning opportunities for reform. A number of issues regarding resource accessibility for teachers across the Tasmanian education sectors were identified in the dominant discourses. Participants of this study noted that teachers required additional support in the form of relevant or teacher-selected professional learning and explicit documentation, exemplar planning and assessment resources, time allocation, and collaborative exercises such as increased collegial discussion and professional consultation or access to discrete, confidential, and external mentor or curriculum planning review programs.

The dominant discourses revealed the need to increase access to *AC: E* resources in order to meet the new national curriculum requirements in planning and practice in Tasmania. This is an important finding since teachers who were afforded ease of access to particular resources were able to locate materials faster, which assisted with the development of teacher pedagogical content knowledge and preparation for their classes. The dominant discourses showed that teachers

with reduced access to resources were impacted negatively through an increased workload to locate materials, and in feeling excluded from the reform processes.

The dominant discourses provided teachers' perspectives of their level of access to *AC: E* resources. The perspectives were dependent on the education sector in which the teacher participants were employed. The dominant discourses showed that there was a deficit of access to useful resources for teachers. The inequity of access to *AC: E* resources frustrated teachers who considered the *AC: E* to be a national curriculum that ought to have national access and collaborative processes. Resourcing of *AC: E* materials and the accessibility of the resources added to teacher frustration, causing teachers to feel disempowered, drained, and overworked. The side-effects of reduced resource access for teachers include unnecessary use of time to prepare for the *AC: E* as teacher, reduced self-efficacy through workload stress, and produced lowered professional regard for the *AC: E* reform.

Inequitable or exclusive resource management differences between education sectors created anxiety and tension for teachers, particularly where teachers were aware of these disparities. Inconsistent resourcing created confused understandings of the introduced curriculum reform, creating further tension around pedagogical content knowledge and assessment required to be implemented by teachers for students.

The dominant discourses showed that resource access was impacted by teachers' sector of employment, which afforded or denied permission to access to *AC: E* materials. Lack of access suggested that teachers from different sectors were being provided varied or insufficient resources, which indicated a lack of consistency for what is a national curriculum. Further, this showed a level of control over access to resources likely due to funding allocations. Extant text data provided evidence to support the perspectives of teacher participants, from all sectors, that there was unequal access to *AC: E* resources during implementation.

Privileged or exclusive access to *AC: E* resources disempowered teacher participants of sectors who did not have authority to directly access them. In turn, this forced the teachers excluded from accessing *AC: E* resources, to locate additional independent professional learning in their personal time in order to reflect on and implement *AC: E* materials. Exclusion from access to resources and an unnecessary additional workload caused disempowering issues including preventable stress, a perspective of professional vulnerability through exclusion, and as being professionally undervalued.

#### **6.2.2.2 Focused professional learning**

Teachers identified through the dominant discourses, professional learning needs that would support the use of the *AC: E* in their practice. Teachers expressed the need for additional professional learning to implement the new *AC: E* requirements. These areas of need are contingent on participant teaching background, access to resources, and pedagogical content knowledge. Some areas that were identified, require intensive training for teachers to feel confident in delivering content to students. These areas typically include core English components, such as grammar and writing. The dominant discourses revealed that teachers saw the structure and terminology of the *AC: E* as convoluted and overwhelming. Convoluted materials caused some teachers to feel inadequately prepared to teach the *AC: E*, which resulted in lowered perspectives of self-efficacy and frustration towards reform. As such, the dominant discourses have recognised the need for greater *AC: E* terminology clarity, which is vital for comprehensive access to and use of the curriculum.

Through examination of the dominant discourses, teacher participants showed that access to focused professional learning was not possible due to lack of funding. However, the identification of focused professional learning needs highlighted teacher participants' prevailing and problematic concern for equitable

access to relevant *AC: E* support. Relevant resource provision is essential to avoid the waste of limited funding.

Provision of equitable, sustained and targeted professional learning improves teacher knowledge and practice. This finding reinforced the need for increased and sustained stakeholder communication and the encouragement of flexibility and support rather than dismissal of requests for such support. In addressing teacher needs, teacher frustration levels would decrease, efficacy would improve, and in turn, improve education reform and outcomes.

### **6.2.2.3 Mentoring**

Mentoring was identified in the discourses to be crucial for teachers to improve self-efficacy, teacher agency and practice, particularly for educational reform. The dominant discourses showed that mentoring is an area of need for teachers, from all Tasmanian education sectors. Mentoring through sustained support via professional learning and practice review, without judgement or fear of professional reputation or employment being impacted, was considered by teachers as vital for the longevity of practice and support for the *AC: E*. In consideration of the perceived confusion of a convoluted and overwhelming curriculum, the discourses revealed that teacher participants from all sectors required an easily accessible mentor when necessary. The dominant discourses showed that teacher perspective of need for professional mentoring emerged from the teachers' perceived lack of access to *AC: E* resources.

Through the dominant discourses, the need for mentoring was identified as being able to assist teachers with personalised discussion of their needs, as a form of professional development. This would help teachers to focus on teacher practice, with transference to colleagues for greater equity and internal stakeholder efficacy. Support such as mentoring was considered by the teacher participants as an essential component of teaching, and that it must not be

considered as a professional privilege. One-on-one or small group contact was perceived as highly effective by the teacher participants, as it enabled cohesiveness and professional learning to meet immediate and long-term pedagogical content knowledge needs. The dominant discourses showed that teachers viewed access to a mentor as likely to improve their self-efficacy and confidence in the classroom, further improving quality of teaching for students. The issues of funding and time availability were considered as a negating factor in schools being able to provide intensive mentor support, but such support was a critical element in ensuring teacher confidence and guidance in the implementation and delivery of the AC: E or other future educational reform.

Through the dominant discourses, the research identified the importance of cohesiveness in the school environment regarding mentoring. The majority of teacher participants' perspectives indicated that there is further work to be done to highlight the need for mentor support for all education stakeholders to facilitate improved professional capacity.

#### **6.2.2.4 Summary of Research Aim Two**

A review of the teacher participant data and the use of extant texts as supporting data, revealed teacher participants' perspectives of areas of need for teachers during educational reform. The dominant discourses revealed that particular elements of reform were perceived as either effective or inadequate in schools and sectors, dependent on their supports and school culture. Essential needs for teachers before, during and after reform implementation were also identified.

Focused professional learning support to develop appropriate pedagogical content knowledge was viewed as an essential element of provisions for teachers. Mentoring and equitable resource access acknowledged the importance of teacher

agency through respect for promotion of good practice and furthering of professional skills.

The dominant discourses revealed that teachers felt that the *AC: E* reform saw the increase in their workload, lack of support and exclusion of teachers from reform negotiations impeded the implementation of the *AC: E*. As such, teachers felt that there was not necessarily an easy transition to or an improvement in curriculum implementation, compared with the previous Tasmanian curriculum. The teacher participants admitted to modifying and continuing to use the previous Tasmanian curriculum to overcome confusion in the newer *AC: E*, until the aligning of assessment requirements became problematic.

The teachers recognised that without relevant or equitable resourcing including professional learning, the implementation of the *AC: E* is negated when the teacher participants do not understand how to teach or assess particular strands of the *AC: E*. The dominant discourses showed that teacher participants who felt a lack of confidence or that they were inadequately prepared to teach under the *AC: E*, felt reduced self-efficacy as teachers. The teacher participants also cited that in their uncertainty of the *AC: E* requirements, that they found it difficult to create, or supplement resources required for differentiating the curriculum for particular student learning needs. This created uncertainty and stress for participants who wanted to continue inclusive student engagement with the *AC: E*. Ongoing support for curriculum transition during educational reform for teachers was revealed in the discourses as lacking but vital for their practice. The expectation of teachers to comply with mandated reform without provision of support for the teachers who have to work with it, caused teacher resistance to change, professional disconnection, distrust of authority and loss of teacher agency.

### 6.2.3 Discussion of key findings

Through examination of the data, the dominant discourses revealed Tasmanian secondary school English teacher perspectives of the implementation of the *AC: E*. Implementation processes were generally regarded by the Tasmanian secondary school English teacher participants as reasonable but as requiring greater attention to reform processes that would support teachers. The dominant discourses provided evidence that greater attention to reform processes should include the address of reform and curriculum provisions for teachers. The research suggested that the *AC: E* implementation was a rushed process, at times ambiguous and unsupported. Poor or inadequate resource administration was one element connected to teachers' ambivalent opinion of reform, with broad and, at times, an uneven or compromised relationship between the implementation mandate and the supply of relevant *AC: E* resources for teachers.

The dominant discourses showed that teachers were frustrated with and disappointed in the level of support available for them, with concern for unequal access to resources for colleagues of other education sectors. Teachers were working under stressful, inadequate conditions to implement the *AC: E*, citing that resource allocation such as funding to mobilise essential supports for teachers, as a crucial facilitative issue. The needs of English subject teachers in Tasmanian secondary schools during reform, identified elements found by participants as lacking or non-existent in their schools or sectors. The elements requiring attention include equitable access to *AC: E* resources, focused professional learning and mentorship. The discourses provide evidence that teachers were concerned that without sufficient support, negative perspectives of or resistance to reform were formed.

The dominant discourses revealed that difference in access to resources between education sectors is problematic. The available extant text data revealed



that some teachers were more supported than others. The perspective of professional inequity and isolation disempowered teachers.

Mentoring was a strongly desired professional component that teachers identified as crucial to the support of their practice during and after reform. The dominant discourses revealed the need for access to a mentor who could assist teachers with ongoing pedagogical content knowledge and planning support. This was an area cited as essential since teachers felt that it would reassure and redirect their practice for the *AC: E*. Mentoring was identified as necessary to help teacher access to *AC: E* specific knowledge and teaching strategies.

These findings identify teacher frustration and professional dejection or disempowerment through the dismissal of teacher opinion, knowledge, experience, and autonomy, which cause disconnection and higher attrition and frustration amongst teachers. The findings indicate a binary of teacher need and teacher agency during and post-reform, where, when faced with change, teachers are intrinsically aware of what they need to access and develop. Teachers want to voice these needs, if given the professionally secure opportunity to do so, which would empower a positive professional culture. The findings of the research through the critical discourse analysis suggest that effective communication and trust in teachers supports the resilience and strength of teachers during change, which in turn, supports change. This is achieved through transparent and inclusive reform and implementation processes.

The dominant discourses revealed that teachers felt overworked, ignored, and professionally devalued. This is highly disempowering and personally draining for teachers if left unaddressed. Teacher participants cited a general acceptance of the *AC: E* reform but problematised this with concern for inadequate structural supports such as resources and information provisions that the teachers required. Some aspects of reform did work well in different sites and sectors where school leadership was represented by the teacher participants as

supportive of teacher-input and teacher access to support. More often, these positive aspects such as transparent and respectful communication between stakeholders were found in one particular sector, where teachers felt supported through the *AC: E* reform. Perspectives of inequitable resourcing and workload pressures were more prevalent in other cases. Sectoral differences, including funding and professional resourcing and management, highlighted issues of varied equity for teachers in two of the education sectors. The research also indicated that teachers in different schools, even in the same sector, had different management processes, and that they were dependent on the teacher's professional experience of and ability to cope with change. While this repeats the reported dissatisfaction of the *AC: E* implementation processes for the majority of teacher participants of this research, it indicates that there are some schools with good reform strategies and teacher support, to identify effective reform implementation models.

The dominant discourses have revealed a set of teacher participants' perspectives about reform that inform stakeholders of challenging perspectives and which indicate areas in need of review and change for education sectors and stakeholders. The discourses have also shown that despite the curriculum reform agenda being one that must have national application and be applied and delivered equitably, there exists disparity in *AC: E* reform support for teachers among education sectors. However, the findings indicate that there is significant teacher proactivity, which enables reform, suggesting and reinforcing that teachers have much insight and experience to offer. With improved superordinate stakeholder support, greater cohesiveness, enriched teacher development, and curriculum progress can be achieved.

## **6.3 Recommendations and Future Research**

This section presents the key recommendations of the research, which indicate directions for future research to support ongoing improvement for education reform processes in consideration of teachers as key stakeholders in and facilitators of change. The recognition of teacher experience is important for future-proofing focus, and the imaginative (multiple) practices this demands, [which] can help educators in diverse contexts and disciplines move beyond a largely descriptive (and often pessimistic) acknowledgement of changed and changing circumstances towards a more optimistic, pro-active conceptualisation of educational programs that maximise opportunities for students to cope productively with a failure in which change is constant and novelty in the status quo. (Rowan, 2012b, p. 11).

In providing recommendations for educational reform, stakeholders can consider the implementation processes for future educational change.

### **6.3.1 Recommendations**

This research recommends significant improvements for education stakeholders and processes during reform. The success of innovation in education relies on the creation of systems that invest in and build on the professional capacity of teachers and school leaders to make sound decisions in classrooms and schools, based on their best collective and individual professional judgements.

The first recommendation of this research is to increase the inclusion of the teacher voice as an integral and accepted part of education reform processes. All teachers need to be involved in reform discussions with more effective communication channels. Improvement of communication between stakeholders

expedites processes to support and advance education reform. This recommendation reiterates the need for teachers to be supported by way of relevant resources and professional development, including collegial input, to support teachers. Teacher knowledge and experience of curriculum reform and requirements must be valued, promoted, and accessed, to encourage more effective use of teachers as invaluable professional resources. This is crucial, since teachers understand best their immediate classroom and teaching needs. Similarly, promoting greater recognition of teacher input during reform will empower and facilitate more effective and positive change in a supportive and progressive educational culture. Other stakeholders, including those who govern education reform such as the Australian Federal Government and state governments, will have opportunity to piece together teacher experience of reform, and identify significant teaching issues in different contexts.

Another recommendation is for the provision of relevant use of explicit resources for teachers, that are specific, differentiated, focused and appropriate. It is essential that resource access is equitable. Selective and differentiated resource provision of contextualised and sustained support for teachers is essential to address the prevailing issue of equitable access to professional learning for teachers. Use of differentiated and accessible resources will reduce the pressure of additional workload requirements in order to meet reform requirements and fill the void between mandate and provision. This research strongly suggests that reform resourcing become more equitable for all teachers and asserts that an increase in transparent collegial and stakeholder communication is sorely needed.

Additionally, scaffolded and sustained support, including access to supervisory AC: E experts or mentors, will improve practice for English teachers. The findings indicate that teachers need to be included in gradual reform phases through professional learning to allow for greater acceptance of requirements and improved pedagogical content knowledge by allowing time for teachers to

address their needs with confidence. Moreover, offering targeted and sufficient resources is essential in the promotion of teachers' ongoing professional learning to improve broader education standards. Notably, scaffolded and specialised support will facilitate implementation and maintenance of reform whilst encouraging broader professional development for teachers. Importantly, this recommendation should be coupled with the need for improved, clear curriculum terminology for teachers who have to work comprehensively with the curriculum.

These recommendations are intended to assist stakeholders in the transitional processes of education reform. They will support and empower teachers through the essential and appropriate use of educational supports to build on pre-existing subject knowledge and expertise. In sum, this research strongly recommends stakeholder inclusion of teachers before, during and after reform, to negotiate and anticipate specific requirements for teacher work and processes to improve on, for future educational reform.

### **6.3.2 Future Research**

Future research could expand the scope and application of this research nationally and globally to suit particular education jurisdictions to examine education reform processes and to facilitate supports for teachers. This would both support the research sites and education jurisdictions whilst adding to the corpus of education research about the implementation of curriculum or educational reform.

Modification of research methodology in future investigations could add to this area of research. The study approach, using a constructivist grounded theory and critical discourse analysis informed by poststructural feminist theory, provides voice, or platform, for participants and considers the particularities of education contexts. Further research of this kind in other Australian states and

territories would assist in the exploration of this national *Australian Curriculum* reform. Moreover, international exploration of teacher perspectives of national educational change would inform stakeholder policies and processes for specific educational reform and needs. Other modifications could incorporate the perspectives of superordinate stakeholders such as school principals, heads of education sectors, and government authorities. These perspectives would add to the body of work on educational change, and introduce additional strategies for improvement of reform processes for stakeholders, including for policy considerations. Further research should urgently explore the connection between government mandated curriculum, assessment, and the practice of teaching and pedagogical implications.

Education change is a constant. Consequently, further research is urgently needed explore the effect of greater inclusion of teachers during reform to improve education reform strategies. Further, examination of relationships among stakeholders during reform will facilitate the design of greater support structures, including increased communication for reform processes such as reform negotiation, and transparent policies regarding funding of reform. Such research will assist in positive approaches to and maintenance of reform. Importantly, research that examines the processes of educational change also supports the teachers who predominantly work with change.

## **6.4 Research Contribution**

This research has made a significant contribution to understanding educational reform in Tasmania and the role of education stakeholders in generating progressive impact and direction of educational reform. It has contextualised real experiences of reform for education cohorts, which can be

applied to other education contexts. The research showed how teachers manage their practice during change, enabling critique and consideration of reform provisions and processes by stakeholders.

The identification of the tensions for teachers during reform, including the deprofessionalisation of teachers through adapting to the demands of educational mandate, enables critical reflection for policy makers and teachers for the direction of education. The exploration of Tasmanian secondary school English teacher experience during reform has enabled the researcher to examine issues of reform from the classroom teachers' perspective. Recognition of teacher professionalism and inclusion in education reform acknowledges the prevailing issues of professional support required for teachers.

The research has revealed that the implementation of curriculum reform must recognise teacher perspectives and needs before, during and after reform. Without adequate support for teachers from all stakeholders in the implementation of reform, the processes risk insufficient and fragile structures that do not support the longevity of reform. The research has revealed that stakeholders must recognise the need to continue to question the positioning of teachers, since teachers are the key stakeholders in and facilitators of education and educational change.

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## Appendix A: Documentation of approval to conduct research

### Appendix A.1 Ethics clearance

#### A.1.1 University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) approval

HREC Tasmania (H13010)

<p style="text-align: right;">Social Science Ethics Officer Private Bag 01 Hobart Tasmania 7001 Australia Tel: (03) 6226 2763 Fax: (03) 6226 7148 Katherine.Shaw@utas.edu.au</p>	
<b>HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK</b>	
<p>22 February 2013</p> <p>Professor John Williamson Faculty of Education Locked Bag 1307</p> <p>Student Researcher: Amanda Moran</p> <p>Sent via email</p> <p>Dear Professor Williamson</p> <p>Re: MINIMAL RISK ETHICS APPLICATION APPROVAL Ethics Ref: H0013010 - Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of Implementation at one Tasmanian Catholic School</p>	
<hr/> <p>We are pleased to advise that acting on a mandate from the Tasmania Social Sciences HREC, the Chair of the committee considered and approved the above project on 22 February 2013.</p> <p>This approval constitutes ethical clearance by the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee. The decision and authority to commence the associated research may be dependent on factors beyond the remit of the ethics review process. For example, your research may need ethics clearance from other organisations or review by your research governance coordinator or Head of Department. It is your responsibility to find out if the approval of other bodies or authorities is required. It is recommended that the proposed research should not commence until you have satisfied these requirements.</p> <p>Please note that this approval is for four years and is conditional upon receipt of an annual Progress Report. Ethics approval for this project will lapse if a Progress Report is not submitted.</p>	

Ethics amendment approval confirmation:

Social Science Ethics Officer  
Private Bag 01 Hobart  
Tasmania 7001 Australia  
Tel: (03) 6226 2763  
Fax: (03) 6226 7148  
Human.ethics@utas.edu.au



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HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (TASMANIA) NETWORK

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30 October 2013

Professor John Williamson  
Faculty of Education  
Locked Bag 1308

*Sent via email*

Dear Professor Williamson

Re: APPROVAL FOR AMENDMENT TO CURRENT PROJECT  
Ethics Ref: **H0013010 - Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools**

1. Addition of co-investigator Assoc Prof Helen Chick.
2. Title change to Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools.
3. Revised semi-structured interview questions.
4. Alteration to data withdrawal clause - only unprocessed (unanalysed) data can be removed.
5. Revised documents: Individual Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form, School Information Sheet and Consent Form, Questionnaire, Semi-Structured Interview Schedule, Minimal Risk Application Form all dated October 2013.

---

We are pleased to advise that the Chair of the Tasmania Social Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee approved the Amendment to the above project on 29 October 2013.

Yours sincerely

Katherine Shaw  
Ethics Officer  
Tasmania Social Sciences HREC

### **A.1.2 Tasmanian Department of Education research approval**

Tasmanian Department of Education EPS (DoE File number: 2013-37)

Department of Education  
EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE SERVICES

273 Murray Street, Hobart  
GPO Box 169, Hobart, TAS 7001 Australia



File: 2013- 37

5 November 2013

Ms Amanda Moran



Dear Ms Moran

#### **Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of the implementation in Tasmanian schools**

I have been advised by the Educational Performance Research Committee that the above research study adheres to the guidelines established and that there is no objection to the study proceeding.

Please note that you have been given permission to proceed at a general level, and not at individual school level. You will still need to seek permission from the principal of the schools involved in the study. Please provide them with the File number or a copy of this letter when approaching them for assistance.

A copy of your final report should be forwarded to Educational Performance Services, Department of Education, GPO Box 169, Hobart, 7001 at your earliest convenience and within six months of the completion of the research phase.

If you have further questions or concerns please contact Fiona Atkins on (62) 337656.

Yours sincerely

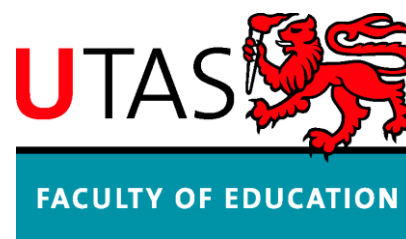
Katrina Beams, Assistant Director  
(Educational Performance Services)



## Appendix A.2 Information letters

### A.2.1 Information letter to Principal

Amanda Moran  
Professor John Williamson  
Hobart Campus  
Tasmania Australia  
armoran@utas.edu.au  
www.utas.edu.au  
HREC ID: H13010



November 2013

RE: PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Principal,

I am a current PhD candidate of the University of Tasmania and a Teacher/Teacher Assistant at Guilford Young College in Hobart. I would like to conduct research at your school, which will form the basis for a thesis in partial fulfilment of a Doctor of Philosophy degree under the supervision of Professor John Williamson and Associate Professor Helen Chick. I am writing to seek your permission to undertake research in your school with your Year 7-10 English subject teachers, and to request your assistance in the invitation process of appropriate participants by disseminating the enclosed materials to your year 7-10 English teachers.

My project is titled *Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools*. This study will explore, through a qualitative case study, qualified practising Tasmanian Secondary English teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Secondary English in the new Australian Curriculum to ascertain where support and professional development is needed. The opportunity exists to identify processes to support teachers in curriculum implementation whilst sharing the experiences of curriculum change through collegial professional dialogue. The findings of this study can contribute to further research in this area and provide valuable information to support teacher education and curriculum development and implementation in Australia.

I intend to invite voluntary teacher responses via a handwritten questionnaire (30mins), the audio-recording and transcription of a voluntary and confidential interview (45-60mins), and the collection of publicly disseminated texts concerning the Australian Curriculum. This data will allow me to examine professional opinion, assist teachers in learning about the new curriculum, and to look for areas of professional development opportunities to support teacher understanding of the curriculum. Please find attached a copy of the Information sheet and Consent Form for participants.

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. There will be no effect on the content of lessons, and participants will not be assessed from this in any way. Interviews and questionnaires will be conducted at mutually convenient times that will not disrupt school activities. The school and participants will remain completely anonymous by removal of all names from the data collected. All data will be securely kept on University of Tasmania premises for a period of five years after this research has been completed, and then securely destroyed unless a participant requests to procure their individual data.

The research has received ethical approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Tasmania) Network (HREC H13010). If you have any concerns or complaints about the manner in which the research is being conducted, please contact the Executive Officer of the Network (Ph 03 6226 2763).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your consideration. Your participation will be a valued and necessary part of my research. I look forward to working with you and your teaching staff. If you have any queries or concerns, please feel free to contact me. Alternatively, you may contact the project's Chief Investigator Professor John Williamson (03 6324 3339). If you agree for your English teachers to participate, you will be asked to sign and return a consent form (attached with the attached stamped and addressed envelope).

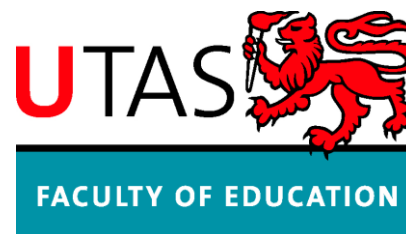
Yours faithfully,

*Researcher's signature here*

Amanda Moran  
PhD Candidate  
University of Tasmania

## A.2.1 Information letter to Teachers

Amanda Moran  
Professor John Williamson  
Hobart Campus  
Tasmania Australia  
armoran@utas.edu.au  
www.utas.edu.au  
HREC ID: H13010



November 2013

RE: PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Colleague,

You are invited to participate in a research study titled *Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools*. The aim of this study is to explore practising Tasmanian Secondary English teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Secondary English in the new Australian Curriculum to identify where support and professional development is needed. This study is being conducted in partial fulfilment of a Doctor of Philosophy degree for Amanda Moran under the supervision of Professor John Williamson and Associate Professor Helen Chick.

### 1. 'Why have I been invited to participate in this study?'

Qualified practising Secondary English teachers have been chosen as they are directly involved in the implementation of the English curriculum in an informed and professional manner.

### 2. 'What does this study involve?'

You will be invited to participate in a handwritten questionnaire which will take approximately 30mins and an optional confidential, audio-recorded and transcribed interview of around 45-60mins during the course of this study at times suitable to you, commencing Term 4, 2013. Your confidentiality will be maintained by removal of your name from the collected data. These valuable responses will serve as further support of your pedagogical approach, position on teacher education, and needs during this transitional period in the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English.

It is important to understand that your involvement in this study is voluntary. While we would be pleased to have you participate, we respect your right to decline. There will be no consequence to you if you decide not to participate. If you decide to discontinue participation at any time, you may do so without providing an explanation. You may also withdraw any unprocessed data. All information will be treated in a confidential manner. Your name will not be used in any publication arising from this research. All research files (electronic and paper-based) will be held securely at Hytten Hall; University of Tasmania, Hobart campus for a minimum of five (5) years following the publication of reports or articles resulting from data generation, and then securely destroyed.

### 3. Are there any possible benefits from participation in this study?

This research will provide a structured, proactive and productive opportunity to discuss and explore the demands of the implementation of the Secondary English Curriculum. The opportunity also exists to identify processes to support teachers in curriculum implementation whilst sharing the experiences of curriculum change through collegial professional dialogue. The findings of this study can contribute to further research in this area and provide valuable information to support teacher education, policy development and implementation in Australia.

### 4. Are there any possible risks from participation in this study?

There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. There will be no effect on the content of your lessons, and you will not be assessed through this research in any way. Interviews and questionnaires will be conducted at mutually convenient times that will not disrupt school activities. Any unprocessed portion of the data that you contribute to this research can be removed or edited on request. Both the school and you will remain completely anonymous by removal of all names from the data collected. All data will be securely kept on University of Tasmania premises for a period of five years after this research has been completed, and then completely destroyed. If you find that you are becoming distressed or concerned about participating in this study, you will be advised to receive support from ourselves or alternatively, we will arrange for you to see a counsellor at no expense to you. The contact details for this counselling service are:

#### University of Tasmania Counselling Service

Sandy Bay Campus  
Level 1, Student Centre  
Administration Building  
Phone: (03) 6226 2697

## 5. What if I have questions about this research?

If you would like to discuss any aspect of this study please contact either Amanda Moran email: [armoran@utas.edu.au](mailto:armoran@utas.edu.au) or Professor John Williamson (phone: 03 6324 3339). You are welcome to contact us at any time to discuss any issue related to the research. A copy of the completed thesis will be available upon request.

This study has been approved by the Tasmanian Social Science Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have concerns or complaints about the conduct of this study, you should contact the Executive Officer of the HREC (Tasmania) Network on (03) 6226 7479 or email [human.ethics@utas.edu.au](mailto:human.ethics@utas.edu.au). The Executive Officer is the person nominated to receive complaints from research participants. You will need to quote HREC project number **H13010**.

**Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.**

**If you wish to take part in this study; please sign the attached consent form, complete the attached questionnaire and post these documents in the addressed and stamped envelope that has been provided to:**

Amanda Moran  
Faculty of Education, Hytten Hall  
Private Bag 66 Hobart Tasmania 7001 Australia

**This information sheet is for you to keep.**

Kindest regards,

*Researcher's signature here*

Amanda Moran

*PhD Candidate*

*University of Tasmania*



## Appendix A.3 Consent forms

### A.3.1 Consent form to Principal

Amanda Moran  
Professor John Williamson  
Hobart Campus  
Tasmania Australia  
armoran@utas.edu.au  
www.utas.edu.au  
HREC ID: H13010



November 2013

#### SCHOOL/PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM

**Research project: Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools.**

1. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this project.
2. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
3. I understand that the study involves the opportunity for this school's English teachers to voluntarily participate in a handwritten response questionnaire, optional audio-recorded and transcribed (made anonymous) individual interviews; and the collection of publicly disseminated curriculum documents, which will be used for research purposes only, and that this will not affect my school or I.
4. I understand that participation by the school teachers involves no foreseen risk(s) but counselling will be made available to these staff if requested.
5. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania premises for five years after publication of reports, and will then be destroyed.
6. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
7. I understand that the researchers will maintain participants' identity as confidential and anonymous, and that any information supplied to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research.
8. I agree for the school's teachers to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw this permission at any time without any effect, and, if the teachers so wish may request that any unprocessed data supplied to date be withdrawn from the research.

Name of Participating School: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Statement by Investigator

☐

I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this school and I believe that the consent is informed and that the participant understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐

The school has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so participants have the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

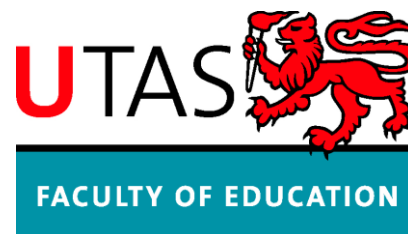
Name of investigator \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of investigator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### A.3.1 Consent form to Teachers

Amanda Moran  
Professor John Williamson  
Hobart Campus  
Tasmania Australia  
armoran@utas.edu.au  
www.utas.edu.au  
HREC ID: H13010



November 2013

#### Participant CONSENT FORM

#### **Research project: Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools.**

1. I agree to take part in the research study named above.
2. I have read and understood the Information Sheet for this study.
3. The nature and possible effects of the study have been explained to me.
4. I understand that the study involves the opportunity to participate in a handwritten questionnaire and an optional audio-recorded and transcribed interview, which will be used for research purposes only, and that this will not affect myself or my teaching position.
5. I understand that participation involves no foreseeable risk(s).
6. I understand that all research data will be securely stored on the University of Tasmania Faculty of Education premises for five years after publication of reports and will then be destroyed completely.
7. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.
8. I understand that the researchers will maintain my identity as confidential and anonymous, and that any information supplied to the researcher(s) will be used only for the purposes of the research.
9. I agree to participate in this investigation and understand that I may withdraw permission at any time without any effect. I understand that I will be able to withdraw my unprocessed data after completing the questionnaire and/or interview.

Participant's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact email: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Statement by Investigator

☐ I have explained the project and the implications of participation in it to this participant and I believe that the consent is informed and that the participant understands the implications of participation.

If the Investigator has not had an opportunity to talk to participants prior to them participating, the following must be ticked.

☐ The participant has received the Information Sheet where my details have been provided so that participants have the opportunity to contact me prior to consenting to participate in this project.

Name of investigator: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

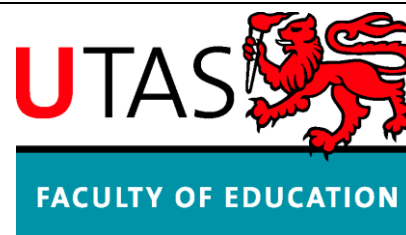
Researcher use: CF\_\_\_ P\_\_\_.

## Appendix B: Data instruments

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### Appendix B.1 Questionnaire

Amanda Moran  
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HREC ID: H13010



### ***Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perceptions of implementation in Tasmanian Schools***

#### **Questionnaire**

The implementation of a new curriculum requires both pedagogical and content knowledge acquisition and administrative support from school leadership. This study will explore Tasmanian Secondary English teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English to identify where support and professional development is needed.

The aims of this study are to:

- iii) Investigate Tasmanian qualified practising teachers' perceptions of the implementation processes associated with the rollout of the new Australian Curriculum: English, to identify English teachers' professional needs.
- iv) Identify areas of support and professional development for practising Secondary English teachers in Tasmania.

This is a voluntary and qualitative questionnaire. Your professional participation is invited as part of a research project into teacher perceptions and experiences of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English. There are 39 questions, and it is anticipated that the questionnaire will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Please post your signed consent form and completed questionnaire in the stamped and addressed envelope that has been provided. If you have any questions, or would like to discuss any aspect of this research please feel free to contact the project's Chief Investigator, Professor John Williamson (John.Williamson@utas.edu.au).

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amanda Moran

*PhD Candidate  
University of Tasmania*

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire completion date (DD MM YYYY):    \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_

Participant reference code: (researcher use only)    CF \_\_\_\_ P \_\_\_\_

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### SECTION ONE

1. A) How long have you been teaching English in Tasmania? (*Please circle*):

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-14 years
- 15+ years

B) Have you taught English outside of Tasmania? If so, where?

2. A) What is/are your current role/s at your school? (*Please circle one or more*):

- English Teacher
- Head of English
- Advanced Skills Teacher
- School Leadership/Manager
- Other (please specify): .....

B) I work (please circle):

- Full time
- Part time

3. Which curriculum are you most familiar with? (*Please circle*):

- Essential Learnings
- Tasmanian Curriculum
- Australian Curriculum
- Other: .....

4. Please circle one of the following statements that best applies to you:

- I have read the Australian Curriculum: English in PART
- I have read the Australian Curriculum: English in FULL
- I have not read the Australian Curriculum: English documents

If you are not familiar with the Australian Curriculum: English, please say why below:

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

5. How many times have you been directly or indirectly involved in curriculum change during your time as a teacher?

.....

.....

6. How do you anticipate current curriculum changes to affect your teaching practise?  
(Please circle one or more of the following):

- Opportunities for improved pedagogical content and curriculum knowledge
  - I will need to re-do my English planning
  - I will need to make major changes to my teaching practise
  - I will only need to make minor changes to my teaching practise
  - There will be no foreseeable change to my teaching practise
  - Other: .....
- .....

7. Which of the Australian Curriculum: English strands would or do you feel most confident in teaching?

*(Please circle one or more of the following):*

- Language
- Literature
- Literacy

8. How useful do you find the following professional development scenarios? Please rank from 6 - most useful, to 1 – least useful:

- \_ \_ \_ Conference/workshop
- \_ \_ \_ Watching a colleague teach
- \_ \_ \_ Professional discussion with a colleague
- \_ \_ \_ Personal research and reading about education change/issues
- \_ \_ \_ Online learning
- \_ \_ \_ Face-to-face training/courses

**SECTION ONE (continued over)**

9. In the table below, please write beside the type of English and curriculum professional development that you have attended, who the main provider of the PD was; what the main focus was; how valuable you recall the session; and what impact the session had on your professional practise.

<b>English Professional development type</b>	<b>Main provider</b> (e.g. Department of Education, University, Private sector/consultant, local authority staff, colleagues, etc.)	<b>Main focus of the professional development session</b>	<b>Value of session as teacher</b> 4 – very valuable 3 – valuable 2 – little value 1 – no value	<b>Impact of session on your practise</b> 4 – large impact 3 – some impact 2 – little impact 1 – no impact
Teaching and learning methods				
English subject knowledge				
Curriculum/ syllabus and development planning				
Assessment/ moderation/ report writing				
Other (please specify):				

**SECTION TWO (over page)**

## SECTION TWO

For the following table, please mark your level of agreement against the statements with an 'X'.

<b>QUESTION</b> <i>Response:</i> <i>Please mark the corresponding box with an 'X'.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure (need Qn. clarification)</b>
<b>11</b>	I am familiar with the Australian Curriculum: English & the terminologies within it.						
<b>12</b>	I find the Australian Curriculum: English easy to follow & teach to.						
<b>13</b>	The Australian Curriculum: English is effective for year 7-10 English assessment (e.g. TCE).						
<b>14</b>	There are areas in some English subjects that I now find more time consuming to prepare for and deliver.						
<b>15</b>	I have had access to useful Australian Curriculum: English professional development.						
<b>16</b>	My school about the Australian Curriculum often provides professional development opportunities: English.						
<b>17</b>	Australian Curriculum: English PD sessions have been useful for me as a teacher.						
<b>18</b>	There is a sufficient revision/ feedback process for teachers about the curriculum.						
<b>19</b>	I have been given time to discuss curriculum and change.						
<b>20</b>	I am expected to locate and learn about changes to the curriculum, independently.						
<b>21</b>	The implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English has been orderly/well-structured at my school.						



<b>QUESTION</b> <i>Response:</i> <i>Please mark the corresponding box with an 'X'.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Unsure (need Qn. clarification)</b>
<b>22</b>	The roles for English teachers during implementation are clear.						
<b>23</b>	There is an up to date, definite and transparent flow of information and PD opportunities for teachers.						
<b>24</b>	There is adequate leadership both verbally and via documents, with modelling or examples of how to teach and assess English materials under the Australian Curriculum.						
<b>25</b>	I feel under pressure during education reform/curriculum change.						
<b>26</b>	As a Tasmanian English teacher my voice is heard by superordinate stakeholders (school management, the government, etc.).						
<b>27</b>	The teacher's voice is respected and acted on in decision-making/reform periods in general.						
<b>28</b>	I was consulted effectively about the Australian Curriculum: English.						
<b>29</b>	The Australian Curriculum: English will be useful for me as a teacher (planning & teaching).						
<b>30</b>	I have had ample time to examine and digest the Australian Curriculum: English documents						
<b>31</b>	Sufficient time for collegial discussions about the implementation of the Australian Curriculum has been provided						
<b>32</b>	I find the Australian Curriculum materials clear & user-friendly.						
<b>33</b>	Planning under the Australian Curriculum will be easier than under previous curricula.						

### SECTION THREE – Short answers

**34.** How do you view curriculum change? Positively? Negatively? Why?

.....

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**35.** How will you prepare professionally for the Australian Curriculum: English?

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**36.** How and where have you accessed information on the Australian Curriculum: English?

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**37.** What are your expectations around mandated curriculum change (level and type  
Of support)?

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.....

**38.** What do you see as the top three keys professional development needs surrounding curriculum change?

What specific type of activities would be necessary to effectively address these needs?

- Need: .....

Addressed by: .....

- Need: .....

Addressed by: .....

- Need: .....

Addressed by: .....

**39.** Do you have any other comments or questions about the Australian Curriculum: English?

.....

.....

.....

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.....

.....

.....

**Please continue over →**

**Before you go, would you like to participate in a follow-up interview for this study?**

NB - You will remain completely anonymous by removal of all names from the interview, and all information will be held in confidence for research purposes only.

*(Please circle):*

**a) Yes.** (Please write your email address below to arrange interview time):

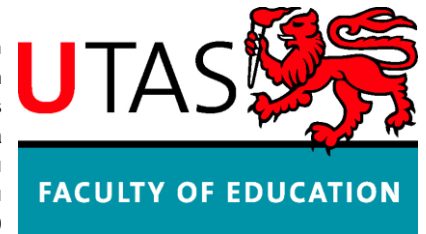
*Email address:* .....

**b) No, thank you.**

*Thank you again for your participation in this questionnaire.*

*The Australian Curriculum: English can be viewed at <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Rationale> .*

Amanda Moran  
Professor John Williamson  
Hobart Campus  
Tasmania Australia  
armoran@utas.edu.au  
www.utas.edu.au  
HREC ID: H13010



### **Secondary English in the Australian Curriculum: English teachers' perspectives of implementation in Tasmanian Schools**

#### **Semi-Structured Interview**

The implementation of a new curriculum requires both pedagogical and content knowledge acquisition and administrative support from school leadership. This study will explore Tasmanian Secondary English teachers' perceptions of the implementation of Secondary English in the new Australian Curriculum to identify where support and professional development is needed.

The aims of this study are to:

- v) Investigate Tasmanian qualified practising teachers' perceptions of the implementation processes associated with the rollout of the new Australian Curriculum: English, to identify English teachers' professional needs.
- vi) Identify areas of support and professional development for practising Secondary English teachers in Tasmania.

This is a voluntary and qualitative semi-structured interview. Your professional participation is invited as part of a research project into teacher perceptions and experiences of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English. There are 30 questions, and it is anticipated that the interview would take approximately 60 minutes to complete, dependent on the length of some of your responses.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss any aspect of this research please feel free to contact the project's Chief Investigator, Professor John Williamson (John.Williamson@utas.edu.au).

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Amanda Moran

*PhD Candidate*

*University of Tasmania*

### Semi-structured interview schedule

#### **Basic details**

**Interview Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time:** a) start: \_\_\_\_\_ b) finish: \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant reference code:** CF \_\_\_\_\_ P \_\_\_\_\_

**Interview number:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

#### **THE FOLLOWING ARE EXAMPLE QUESTIONS – QUESTIONS WILL BE RECONSTRUCTED/ BASED ON QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS.**

##### **- CONTEXTUAL: These questions will help to identify the form and nature of what exists.**

- How would you describe the Australian Curriculum: English (ACE)?
- How does curriculum implementation happen in your school in general, and with respect to English?
- Describe the chain of reform and the role of the English teacher at your school.
- What could be changed or done differently?
- How much can you influence the decisions that are made in your school?
- Teachers are viewing the implementation of the Australian Curriculum: English positively and negatively. From your point of view, what are the positives and negatives? Has the new Australian Curriculum: English caused you to alter your practise?

##### **- DIAGNOSTIC: These questions will examine the reasons for or causes of, what exists.**

- How does the ACE align with your experience under the previous TASMANIAN curriculum?
- Do you think you need additional PD or support for the implementation of the ACE?
- Are you prepared for the implementation of the ACE?
- Do you have time for accessing help in the implementation of the ACE?
- Would you access additional support?
- PD can be accessed online. What sort of PD works best for you? Why?
- What sort of PD is more commonly provided for teachers in your school? How effective do you think that this is?
- Most teachers have experienced curriculum reform several times, viewing change as an opportunity to improve pedagogical content and curriculum knowledge. What do these changes mean for you as an English teacher in regards to teaching practise and workload?
- How many hours per day do you spend planning your lessons or units of work at school? At home?
- Generally, English teachers have read the English curriculum in full, yet don't feel that it is easy to follow or to teach to. What makes the English curriculum somewhat complex for English teachers to work with? Why? What specifically?
- Is this complexity different from previous curriculums?
- Many teachers have listed the Language strand of the English curriculum as their least confident area. Why do they think so? Is this true for you?

**- STRATEGIC: These questions help in identifying new theories, policies, plans or actions.**

- Do you feel that teachers are autonomous professionals, able to engage effectively with the Australian Curriculum reforms? How and why?
- How does your school support teacher professional development?
- Teachers have noted that English professional development has been somewhat useful, particularly for assessment and moderation. How often and what type of English specific PD has been provided at your school? How do these sessions help you as an English teacher?
- Most teachers have made mention that PD would work best if an ACARA official or curriculum consultant, expert to each subject would visit teachers to work one-on-one or in small groups to provide specific review, resources and recommendations to support the work of teachers. At present, what would a curriculum expert be able to help you and or your colleagues with?
- Are there sufficient opportunities for teacher collaboration to help develop understanding of a new curriculum?
- There have been calls to return to holding cluster or broader professional assessment moderation sessions or at least to have units of work and assessment exemplars available for teachers. Do teachers require more time and flexibility for more professional collaboration and English workshops? Why?
- How would these collegial meetings be structured and what would you like to see done in them?
- Some teachers have mentioned rubrics as being an issue for them in the implementation of the ACE. Have they been a concern for you? Why? What makes it difficult? What would help?
- What sort of curriculum review or feedback opportunities have you had? Are teachers' opinions valued by superordinate stakeholders (the school, ACARA)?

**- EVALUATIVE: The questions appraise the effectiveness of what exists.**

- Do you think we needed a new curriculum to replace the previous one? Why?
- Do you feel that your English planning aligns best with the Tasmanian Curriculum, Australian Curriculum or a different curriculum? Why?
- How should a new curriculum be implemented?
- How should teachers be involved and supported in the reform process?
- What needs to be changed or supplemented, if anything, for successful curriculum implementation?
- How does complying with the accountability demands (planning and assessment) of present curricula align with your teaching practise?
- Do you have any other comments or questions about the Australian Curriculum: English?

(Adapted from Miles & Huberman (2002). *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion. Applied Policy Research*. P.307).

Thank you for your participation in this interview.

The Australian Curriculum for English can be viewed at  
<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Rationale>

## Appendix B.3 Extant text review proforma

ETA Document #

EXTANT TEXT ANALYSIS						
Document name (if applicable):						
Author:						
Access:						
Document number:		Contextual Positioning (Ralph et al 2014)			Response to extant text by researcher	
National, State Or Tasmanian education sector (circle)	Bogdan & Biklen–text type (circle)	Context	Purpose	Questions		
National (ACARA)	Official	Who	To identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who participated in conceiving, supporting, shaping, writing, editing, and publishing the text?</li> </ul>		
Tas. State Govt.						
Department of Education						
Catholic Education Office	Popular culture			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who was its production intended to benefit?</li> </ul>		
Independent Schools Tasmania	Personal	What	To define	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What stated or assumed purposes does it serve?</li> </ul>		
Further notes:					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What specific value does this text bring to the current study?</li> </ul>	
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the parameters of the information?</li> </ul>	
	When	To chronicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When was the document conceived, produced, updated?</li> </ul>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the document's intended lifespan?</li> </ul>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are the issues that influenced and informed the production of this document relevant to the temporal context of the current study?</li> </ul>			
	Where	To locate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where was the document produced?</li> </ul>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where is the document intended for use?</li> </ul>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where is the document positioned in respect of sociological context?</li> </ul>			
	Why	To rationalize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why would the text be used?</li> </ul>			
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why, if at all, is the text unique, reliable, and consistent?</li> </ul>			
How	To explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How (if at all) do the authors of the text propose it be used?</li> </ul>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the text written?</li> </ul>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the document achieving its purpose?</li> </ul>				



## Appendix C: Coding lists with frequencies

### Appendix C.1 Coding progression

**Table 4.2 – Example of coding progression**

Table 4.2 – Example of coding progression

Preliminary coding			Initial coding			Focused codes			Categories		Axial codes/ Themes		
Preliminary Coding			Initial Coding			Focused Coding			Categories		Axial Coding		
Preliminary Code (Memo) PC	PC#	Descriptor	Initial Code (IC)	IC#	Descriptor	Focused Code (FC)	FC#	Descriptor	Category	C#	Axial Code (AC)	AC#	Descriptor
AC:E PD USEFUL	28	Teacher received ACE ProDev; superordinate efficacy; clarity effective with teacher positive perspective; Superordinate clarity effective and positive perspective for practise enhancement NEEDS met.	TEACHER PERCEIVES THAT PRACTICAL NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET – SUPPORTED	21	Underlying context that teacher has support available for AC:E via internal and external superordinates.	SATIATED NEEDS	10	Practical aspect have been met, teacher feels supported.	SATIATED and HOVERING NEEDS	6	SATIATED and HOVERING NEEDS	4	<p><b>SATIATED</b> - Teacher supported through needs met (professional development, discussion, moderation, time release etc.;</p> <p><b>HOVERING</b> - Not met - yet to be or noted</p> <p>Teachers cite need for – Professional support</p> <p>- <b>Focused support</b> – inform via intensive PD;</p> <p>- <b>General and retraining</b> – fill knowledge gaps.</p> <p>Level of need satiation is associated with the efficacy of internal and external superordinate stakeholders, including text or resource availability and accessibility, and level of respect for teacher agency/professional ability.</p>
INTERACTIVE PD USEFUL	43	Teacher values collaborative PD; EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is EFFECTIVE while self-efficacy is working since they attended PD NEEDS met.											
ONLINE PD MOST USEFUL	49	Teacher values independent PD; CLARITY of external superordinates is EFFECTIVE while self-efficacy is confident NEEDS met.											
IMPLEMENTATION HAS BEEN GOOD AT SCHOOL	61	Structure of implementation rating (Likert scale response, high/positive); EFFICACY and Clarity internal superordinates Effective, NEEDS met.											
SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL	100	Structure efficacy internal superordinates is effective or minimal; EFFICACY internal superordinates is											



## Appendix C.2 Preliminary codes

**Table 4.4: Preliminary codes from questionnaire**

Preliminary codes found in questionnaire responses					
PC#	Preliminary (P) code name	QNR Sources	QNR Code Count	Memo of general code ideas	Further idea for initial coding phase
1	AC clarity	4	5	The superordinate efficacy or imp info effectiveness of ACARA/Supers	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and structural CLARITY (knowledge/information) of SUPERORDINATE stakeholders minimal
2	ACARA info mostly unclear	11	26	lack of certainty superord clarity versus expectation of teachers working with AC	CLARITY (knowledge/information) of SUPERORDINATE stakeholders ineffective
3	ACARA lacks explanation	12	34	lack of certainty superord efficacy versus expectation of teachers working with AC	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and structural CLARITY (knowledge/information) of SUPERORDINATE stakeholders ineffective
4	ACE info unclear	12	47	lack of certainty superord efficacy versus expectation of teachers working with AC	CLARITY (knowledge/information) of SUPERORDINATE stakeholders ineffective
5	AC impact on teaching	1	1	If the ACE will change or impact teaching	ATTITUDE ambivalence
6	AC reform will not change practise	3	3	teacher confidence good and sees positive self-efficacy confident	Positive for practise self efficacy is confident
7	ACE confidence NEUTRAL	10	31	teacher neutral might be uncertainty will continue with guidance esp if new or not an internal superordinate self-efficacy minimal	Ambivalent self-efficacy is working or able but has minimal INTERNAL support or efficacy
8	ACE in practice	4	4	teacher functioning with ACE and good guidance self-efficacy minimal	self-efficacy is working or able but has minimal INTERNAL support or efficacy
9	ACE not necessarily easy to teach to.	12	50	teacher not confident anxiety self-efficacy reduced	Negative perspective self-efficacy is reduced or almost able but has minimal INTERNAL support or efficacy
10	Large impact (4) on practise	6	12	stress workload anxiety self-efficacy reduced	Negative perspective self-confidence is reduced or almost able
11	Negative impact	11	45	stress workload anxiety negative perspective self-efficacy reduced	Negative perspective self-efficacy is reduced
12	Positive affect	11	30	positive for practise and for students self-efficacy confident	Positive perspective self-efficacy is effective
13	Some impact on practise	12	65	coping some stress anxiety self-efficacy minimal	Positive perspective for enhanced practise self-efficacy is working
14	AC knowledge	7	11	Teacher confidence in content self-efficacy minimal	Ambivalent perspective self-efficacy is working
15	ACE knowledge neutral	8	17	teacher stress self-efficacy functional but needs PD	Ambivalent perspective self-efficacy is working Needs time for more PD
16	CE Knowledge	12	22	teacher self-efficacy confidence good	Positive perspective for enhanced practise self-efficacy is working
17	ELs confident	1	1	teacher not ACE confident self-efficacy reduced needs PD	Self-efficacy is reduced and needs more PD specific for ACE
18	General adaptation	6	7	teacher confidence good self-efficacy minimal but needs PD	self-efficacy working needs ACE PD support general gaps
19	Language strand confident	5	5	teacher confident self-efficacy minimal or confident	self-efficacy working needs ACE PD support general gaps
20	Literacy confident	5	5	teacher confident self-efficacy minimal or confident	self-efficacy working needs ACE PD support general gaps
21	Literature confident	8	8	teacher confident self-efficacy minimal or confident	self-efficacy working needs ACE PD support general gaps
22	PARTIAL knowledge	12	50	teacher confident self-efficacy minimal	self-efficacy working needs ACE PD support general gaps
23	Tas Curric confident	5	6	teacher confident self-efficacy minimal but not with AC NEED for specific PD	self-efficacy working needs specific ACE PD support specific help
24	AC content PD	2	2	teacher received ACE PD super efficacy minimal	Superordinate efficacy minimal needs are noted by superordinates
25	ACE PD little to no impact	4	6	teacher received ACE PD super efficacy minimal with teacher negative perspective	Superordinate efficacy minimal almost ineffective negative perspective for practise enhancement NEEDS not met
26	ACE PD not necessarily available.	10	29	teacher received some ACE PD super efficacy ineffective with teacher negative perspective	Superordinate efficacy ineffective negative perspective for practise enhancement NEEDS not met
27	ACE PD not necessarily useful.	11	28	teacher received ACE PD super efficacy minimal with teacher negative perspective	Superordinate clarity reduced and negative perspective for practise enhancement NEEDS not met
28	ACE PD useful	9	20	teacher received ACE PD super efficacy clarity effective with teacher positive perspective	Superordinate clarity effective and positive perspective for practise enhancement NEEDS met
29	CEO PD	4	5	identifies PD in TCEO for teachers	Internal Superordinate efficacy minimal NEEDS noted
30	Collegial PD	11	32	Positive perspective of reform	Internal Superordinate efficacy minimal NEEDS noted
31	Conference workshop low value	4	6	Perspective ambivalent the clarity of superordinate PD is reduced	Ambivalent and external Superordinate efficacy reduced NEEDS not met
32	DoE Facilitator for PD	3	3	identifies PD in DOE for teachers	Internal Superordinate efficacy minimal NEEDS noted
33	DoE PD	5	8	identifies PD in DOE for teachers	Internal Superordinate efficacy minimal NEEDS noted
34	External PD SPECIFIC to school	2	3	School supports use of PD from external sources	External Superordinate efficacy minimal NEEDS noted and specific PD
35	Independent PD	12	28	Teacher need for PD but school not providing it Ineffective efficacy	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) of internal superordinates ineffective if teacher is outsourcing PD NEEDS not met
36	Independent PD HIGH value	3	3	Teacher values time release or own PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) of internal superordinates ineffective if teacher is outsourcing PD NEEDS not met while self-efficacy is confident
37	Independent PD LARGE impact	2	3	Teacher values time release own PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) of internal superordinates ineffective if teacher is outsourcing PD NEEDS not met while self-efficacy is confident
38	Independent PD not useful	8	9	Teacher prefers structured PD from Superordinates	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) of internal superordinates effective while self-efficacy is reduced
39	Interactive collegial PD not as useful	7	8	Teacher values time release or own PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal while self-efficacy is working since they see collegial as less effective NEEDS noted

Preliminary codes found in questionnaire responses					
PC#	Preliminary (P) code name	QNR Sources	QNR Code Count	Memo of general code ideas	Further idea for initial coding phase
40	Interactive PD	7	11	Teacher values collaborative PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal while self-efficacy is working since they attended PD NEEDS noted
41	Interactive PD (training) partly useful	6	8	Teacher values collaborative PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal while self-efficacy is working since they attended PD NEEDS noted
42	Interactive PD in person	9	16	Teacher values collaborative PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal while self-efficacy is working since they attended PD NEEDS noted
43	Interactive PD useful	8	16	Teacher values collaborative PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is EFFECTIVE while self-efficacy is working since they attended PD NEEDS met
44	Internal PD	9	23	PD available in-house	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal NEEDS noted
45	Moderation as PD	8	8	Teacher values collaborative PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal NEEDS noted
46	No English subject PD	6	9	Need for ACE PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is ineffective NEEDS not met
47	No PD	5	19	Need for ACE PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is ineffective NEEDS not met
48	Online PD least preferred	7	9	Teacher values collaborative PD	CLARITY of external superordinates is ineffective while self-efficacy is reduced NEEDS not met
49	Online PD most useful	4	6	Teacher values independent PD	CLARITY of external superordinates is EFFECTIVE while self-efficacy is confident NEEDS met
50	PD had little impact (2)	4	6	PD not useful	CLARITY of external superordinates is INEFFECTIVE while self-efficacy is working since they attended NEEDS not met
51	PD on differentiation needed	1	1	Need for ACE PD need more ACARA clarity or guidance	CLARITY of external superordinates is reduced while self-efficacy is working since they see need for aspect of ACE NEED PD specific
52	Pedagogy PD	3	6	Need for ACE PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) and CLARITY of internal superordinates is minimal Needs noted and NEED general PD
53	Personal PD not useful	2	2	Need for ACE PD	EFFICACY (practical implementation or ability) of internal superordinates minimal while self-efficacy is reduced NEED specific PD
54	Personal PD online	6	6	Teacher seeking PD means a Need for ACE PD	NEED more support general PD NEEDS not met
55	Personal PD preferred	3	4	Need for ACE PD preference independent	NEED more support general PD
56	Planning prep PD	6	9	Need for ACE PD	NEED more support specific PD
57	Superordinate PD	5	9	Need for ACE PD	NEED more support general PD NEEDS noted SUPERORDINATE Efficacy is minimal
58	Valuable (3) PD	6	12	Need for ACE PD	NEED more general support PD
59	External PD	4	6	Need for ACE PD	NEED more general support PD NEEDS noted SUPERORDINATE EFFICACY is minimal
60	High expectation from teachers of AC	3	4	Positive that the ACE will help teachers	Positive enhancement
61	Implementation has been good at school	6	18	Structure imp rating (Likert scale response, high/positive)	EFFICACY and Clarity internal superordinates Effective, NEEDS met
62	Literacy PD (Grammar)	4	5	Need for ACE PD	NEED more support PD NEED SPECIFIC PD
63	Need assessment reporting help ie rubrics	9	12	Areas needing help	NEED more support PD specific PD
64	Need better support from DoE and Leadership	12	93	Int Super efficacy is low adds to teacher anxiety stress	EFFICACY and Clarity internal superordinates ineffective NEEDS not met
65	Need flexibility and confidence	12	33	Need more support through PD	Self-efficacy is reduced and needs more PD general
66	Need help with particular areas eg LANG strand	12	14	Need more support through PD	NEED more support PD specific PD
67	Need more external PD	12	47	Need more support through PD	EFFICACY and Clarity external superordinates ineffective NEED more general support PD NEEDS not met
68	Need more meaningful contact support	9	32	Need more support through PD and time	EFFICACY and Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support general PD Needs noted
69	Need more resources for planning and practise	12	77	Need more support through PD and time	EFFICACY and Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support PD noted and specific
70	Need more time to understand and prep	12	68	Need more support through PD and time	EFFICACY and Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support general PD TIMEFRAME is ext unacceptable NEEDS not met
71	Need real consultation and support	12	60	Need more support through PD and mentors	EFFICACY and Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support PD NEEDS not met
72	Need subject specific EXPERTS for meaningful PD	12	41	Need more support through PD and mentors	Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support PD Self-efficacy working NEED specific PD Needs not met
73	Need subject specific PD for all teachers	12	74	Need more support through PD and mentors	Clarity external superords ineffective NEED more support PD Self-efficacy working NEEDS not met SPECIFIC PD
74	Need to be heard	12	47	Need more support and respect	A form of CONTROL - teachers excluded on purpose? Lack of trust in teacher agency? NEEDS not met
75	Need better leadership	12	96	Int superordinate efficacy clarity and structure issues	EFFICACY and CLARITY internal superordinates ineffective Ambivalent
76	Teacher needs	1	1	Need for support	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding
77	Cognitive focus needed	2	3	Need support incl PD	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding NEED specific PD
78	confidence need for	12	46	Need support incl PD and practical	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding NEED specific PD
79	Knowledge need for	12	146	Need support incl PD	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding specific
80	NEED practical help	12	81	Need support incl practical	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding general
81	Need time release	12	96	Need support incl practical	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding general
82	Need to increase support	12	233	Need support	NEED support and PD time mentor and funding NEEDS noted
83	No planning PD	4	5	Need support incl PD and practical	NEED specific support and PD time mentor and funding NEEDS not met
84	ACE impl clear roles.	7	11	structure clarity	EFFICACY of process and CLARITY of information Int and Ext superordinates effective
85	Beginning	8	11	relies on superordinates	NEED general PD support or mentor
86	Collegial discussion available.	8	27	int super efficacy minimal or effective	EFFICACY internal minimal
87	Equality (trust in teacher ability) issue	11	39	trust in teacher agency Support	EFFICACY minimal or reduced when teachers feel voice unheard
88	Experienced teacher	6	10	awareness efficacy good and able to mentor others	EFFICACY self effective and internal capacity to be effective
89	Leader	6	8	awareness efficacy good and able to mentor others	EFFICACY self effective and internal capacity to be effective
90	Reform and ACE has collegial support	8	12	positive perspective of ACE effective int efficacy and structure	Positive perspective enhances practise and collegiality EFFICACY ext and int superordinates effective
91	Teacher not involved during implementation reform	10	25	lack of trust in teacher agency negative perspective	A form of CONTROL - teachers excluded on purpose?
92	Teacher roles unclear	9	31	superordinate clarity and efficacy low	EFFICACY CLARITY of Int and Ext superordinates is reduced or minimal Need general PD support leadership communication Ambivalent

Preliminary codes found in questionnaire responses					
PC#	Preliminary (P) code name	QNR Sources	QNR Code Count	Memo of general code ideas	Further idea for initial coding phase
93	Teachers not heard	12	75	structure of superords low negative perspective lack of trust in teacher agency	EFFICACY int and ext superordinates ineffective CONTROL is rigid where teacher agency not trusted NEGATIVE perspective of supers NEEDS not met
94	Uncertain support	12	112	superordinate clarity and efficacy low	EFFICACY CLARITY of superordinates is reduced or ineffective Need general PD and mentor support
95	Self-preservation	6	6	teacher anxiety around ASKING for help	NEED support through general PD or mentor without judgement CONTROL restricted by fear
96	Superordinate control by Gov	8	16	Teacher agency or freedom to practise: trust in teachers need more support	CONTROL - teacher agency restricted NEEDS noted agency or autonomy issues
97	Superordinate control by Inds int	3	3	Teacher agency or freedom to practise: trust in teachers need more support through advocacy	CONTROL - teacher agency restricted and NEED freedom for feedback NEEDS noted agency or autonomy issue
98	Superordinate control by internal leaders	9	14	Teacher agency or freedom to practise: trust in teachers need more support	CONTROL - teacher agency restricted and NEED freedom for feedback NEEDS noted agency or autonomy issue
99	Superordinate control from ACARA	3	3	Teacher agency or freedom to practise: trust in teachers need more support	CONTROL - teacher agency restricted and NEED more support through consultation representative NEEDS noted agency or autonomy issue
100	Supportive school	7	33	structure efficacy internal superordinates is effective or minimal	EFFICACY internal superordinates is effective, NEEDS met
101	Tasmania teacher	9	11	limited national experience some stress need for PD	NEED support through retraining help PD or mentor
102	Teacher frustration	13	155	Teacher workload ratings stress levels	NEED support through specific PD or mentor NEEDS not met need more time
103	Teacher workload	2	8	workload stress issue	NEED support through general PD or mentor without judgment NEEDS noted
104	ACE preparation tedious	12	61	workload stress issue	NEED support through general PD or mentor NEEDS not met
105	Additional work	14	118	workload stress issue	NEED support through general PD or mentor
106	Diverse skills	4	4	confidence neutral but able to mentor others in some areas	Internal Superordinate efficacy minimal
107	Full time teacher	9	12	workload stress issue	NEED support through time release CONTEXT of employee
108	Part-time	3	3	workload stress issue NOT in full contact means out of loop	NEED support through general PD or mentor if the teacher is not in full contact CONTEXT of employee
109	Reform fatigue	12	31	workload stress issue	NEED support through general PD or mentor
110	ACE Confident	7	14	participant feels positive about content of ACE	Positively enhances practise
111	ACE not good for Eng assessment	7	9	participant feels negative about content of ACE	Negatively enhances practise
112	ACE useful for assessment	7	9	participant feels positive about content of ACE	Positively enhances practise
113	ACE valued lowly	10	41	participant feels negative about content of ACE	Negatively enhances practise
114	Low practical value of ACE	8	17	participant feels negative about content of ACE	Negatively enhances practise
115	Positive view of ACE	11	56	participant feels positive about content of ACE	Positively enhances practise
116	ACARA comprehensive (overwhelming)	11	23	Timeframe - Ext Super - Unacceptable; Internal Super - Ineffective or insufficient	TIMEFRAME external stress TIME required is stressful NEEDS not met
117	ACE impl teacher stress	13	144	Workload and stress issues	TIMEFRAME external and internal stress TIME required is stressful NEEDS not met
118	ACE implementation not organised effectively.	12	86	TIME - Timeframe - Int Super - Effective	EFFICACY of process and timeframe and TIME required is stressful thanks to inefficiencies NEEDS not met
119	Multiple reform	4	5	fatigue workload	TIME required to change is stressful
120	Negative view of ACE implementation.	13	97	unsatisfied negative perspective	Negative for collegiality and enhancement of practise NEEDS not met
121	New to reform.	2	3	going with the flow need to trust superordinates	NEED support through PD or mentor
122	Poor AC implementation within school	11	62	workload efficacy security	EFFICACY internal superordinates is inefficient NEEDS not met

## Appendix C.3 Initial and Focused codes, Categories and Themes

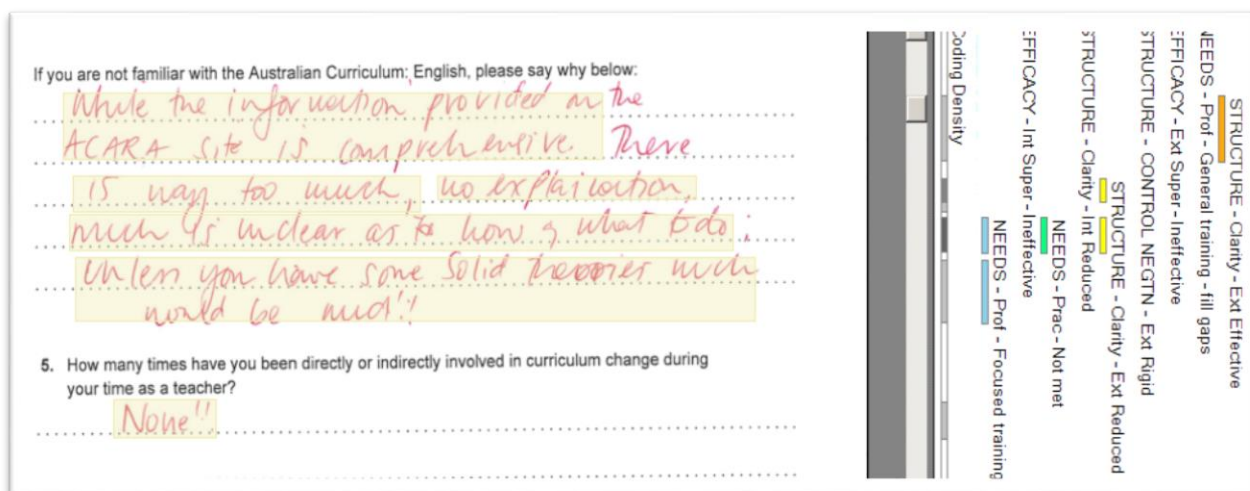
**Table 4.5 – Questionnaire and Interview data: Initial codes and frequencies**

Preliminary coding			Initial coding					
Preliminary codes from questionnaire data, to construct Initial codes; applied to Questionnaire and Interview Data								
Preliminary codes for Initial codes	Questionnaire (QNR) Prelim code count	Initial code ID #	Initial codes (derived from Preliminary coding of questionnaire data)	QNR Sources code found in	QNR Code Count	Interview (IV) Sources	IV Code Count	QNR & IV Code count
5, 7, 14, 15, 31, 75, 92	193	1	Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent of or endures change (could be problematic for professionalism/practise growth)	12	39	7	52	91
9, 10, 11, 25, 26, 27, 93, 111, 113, 114, 120	409	2	Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for)	10	43	8	80	123
12, 60, 90	46	3	Positive Collegiality teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practise.	6	9	6	30	39
6, 12, 13, 16, 28, 60, 90, 110, 112, 115	178	4	Positive enhancement where teachers see AC as able to improve practise and content	12	36	6	30	66
85	11	5	CONTEXT - Beginning teacher	8	8	1	1	9
89	8	6	CONTEXT - Experienced teacher	4	4	1	1	5
107	12	7	CONTEXT - ROLE - Full Time some pressure but good access or awareness	9	9	0	0	9
89	8	8	CONTEXT - ROLE - Internal Superordinate	7	7	2	4	11
106	4	9	CONTEXT - ROLE - more roles equals more time pressure	1	1	3	5	6
108	3	10	CONTEXT - ROLE – Part-Time less pressure but less access	3	3	1	1	4
9 of 12 teachers did not hold leadership roles	3	11	CONTEXT - ROLE - Subordinate - follows or answers to others	5	5	2	2	7
84, 90	23	12	Effective management via external superords (out of sector) - useful for teachers -certainty & support	10	21	2	2	23
3, 26, 31, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 93, 118	514	13	Ineffective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E	12	55	6	54	109
1, 24, 25, 34, 52, 57, 59, 87, 92	101	14	Minimal management from external superordinates (out of sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement AC:E	12	39	8	50	89
38, 43, 61, 84, 90, 100	99	15	Effective management from internal superords (in sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support	12	57	5	33	90
26, 35, 36, 37, 46, 47, 64, 69, 75, 93, 118, 122	634	16	Ineffective management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E	12	81	4	41	122
7, 8, 9, 24, 25, 29, 30, 32, 33, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 53, 57, 59, 86, 92, 106	294	17	Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - teachers are partly uncertain and not fully supported to implement AC:E	12	104	6	51	155
6, 12, 36, 37, 49, 88, 89	60	18	Self-efficacy – Teacher feels Confident or able to adjust easily through knowledge and support.	11	17	1	4	21
9, 10, 11, 17, 38, 48, 53, 65	190	19	Self-efficacy – Teacher feels confidence is Reduced or not feeling confident.	12	22	5	32	54
7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 50, 51, 72, 73,	412	20	Self-efficacy – Teacher is Working or getting by with basics	12	24	8	95	119
28, 43, 49, 61, 100,	93	21	Teacher perceives that practical needs have been met - Supported.	9	23	4	16	39
25, 26, 27, 31, 35, 36, 37, 46, 47, 48, 50, 54, 64, 67, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 83, 93, 102, 104, 116, 117, 118, 120, 122	1290	22	Teacher perceives that practical needs have not been met - yet to be or not met	11	51	7	87	138
24, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 52, 57, 59, 68, 69, 82, 96, 97, 98, 99, 103	534	23	Teacher perceives that practical needs have been noted by superordinates – trying to be met	9	21	6	43	64
17, 23, 34, 51, 53, 56, 62, 63, 66, 69, 72, 73, 77, 78, 79, 83	445	24	Teacher identifies need for professional learning – focused training – to fill gaps and intensive PD includes mentoring	12	80	8	96	176
15, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 52, 54, 55, 57, 58, 59, 65, 67, 68, 70, 71, 76, 80, 81, 82, 85, 92, 94, 95, 102, 103, 104, 105, 108, 109, 121	1325	25	Teacher identifies need for professional learning – General training – to fill gaps includes mentoring	12	87	7	55	142
36, 37, 101	17	26	Teacher identifies need for professional learning – Retraining – mostly able includes mentoring	12	49	0	0	49
100	33	27	Teacher feels level of Professionally guided practise from superordinates rather than autonomy	5	5	5	10	15
93, 96, 97, 98, 99	111	28	Teacher feels restricted practise from superordinates rather than autonomy	2	2	3	15	17
Found in interview data		29	Teacher feels unrestricted practise and or revels in professional autonomy	6	6	2	4	10
28, 49, 84,	37	30	Teacher feels up-to-date through clarity of information via effective external superordinate docs/stakeholders	11	33	0	0	33
1	5	31	Teacher feels somewhat up-to-date through clarity of information via minimal external superordinate docs/stakeholders	12	24	7	38	62
2, 3, 4, 27, 50, 51, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 94	603	32	Teacher feels that there is little or reduced clarity of information via external superordinate docs/stakeholders	9	25	7	50	75
28, 43, 61, 84	65	33	Teacher feels up-to-date through clarity of information via effective internal superordinate docs/stakeholders	11	50	5	19	69
39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 52	80	34	Teacher feels somewhat up-to-date through clarity of information via minimal internal superordinate docs/stakeholders	12	35	6	35	70
27, 46, 47, 48, 64, 75, 94	366	35	Teacher feels that there is little or reduced clarity of information via internal superordinate docs/stakeholders	10	42	3	23	65
100	33	36	Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders	5	8	2	3	11
96	16	37	Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders	2	3	3	3	6
74, 91, 93, 99	150	38	Teacher perceives that there is no or rigid communication and teacher agency via external superordinate stakeholders	7	16	3	8	24
100	33	39	Teacher perceives that there is reasonable or flexible communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	5	6	5	9	15
95, 97, 98	23	40	Teacher perceives that there is little or minimal communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	5	7	4	13	20
74, 91	72	41	Teacher perceives that there is no or rigid communication and teacher agency via internal superordinate stakeholders	6	7	3	14	21
6	3	42	Teacher feels that the time required for workload has had little or no increase.	9	11	0	0	11
76, 81, 83, 116, 117, 118, 119,	360	43	Teacher feels that the time required for workload has seen a major increase.	12	29	7	90	119
68, 69, 70, 71, 77, 78, 79, 80, 82, 102, 107	913	44	Teacher feels that the time required for workload has seen some increase	12	18	7	53	71
Found in interview data		45	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by external superordinates to implement the AC:E as reasonable/effective	10	29	2	4	33
70, 116, 117, 118	321	46	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by external superordinates to implement the AC:E as unreasonable or rushed	12	51	6	50	101
Found in interview data		47	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by internal superordinates to implement the AC:E as reasonable/effective	9	18	3	9	27
116, 117, 118	253	48	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by internal superordinates to implement the AC:E as ineffective/insufficient or rushed	9	28	4	16	44
102, 119	186	49	Teacher perceives the timeframe/allowance by internal superord's to implement AC:E as manageable	11	28	6	43	71

89	8	50	Teacher has experienced multiple education reforms	8	10	2	3	13
85	11	51	Teacher has experienced zero to few reforms	9	12	1	1	13
Total initial code count								2,776

### Appendix C.3.1 Initial coding using NVivo

**Figure 4.1. Example of coding in NVivo**



*Figure 4.1. Example of coding in NVivo software program.*

## Appendix C.4 Initial codes to Focused codes

**Table 4.8 – Initial coding to Focused codes**

Table 4.8 – Initial coding to Focused codes

Initial coding		Focused codes	
<i>Initial codes incl. for Focused coding categories</i>	<b>FC#</b>	<b>Focused Coding</b>	Questionnaire and interview Code Count
1, 2	1	<b>Problematic PERSPECTIVE</b> - Problematic for practise - Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent of or endures change; affected by external factors - PERSPECTIVE problematic for practise - Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for).	214
3, 4	2	<b>Progressive PERSPECTIVE</b> is affected by external factors - Progressive - Perspective progressive positive Collegiality where teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practise and knowledge.	105
12, 15	3	<b>DYNAMIC EFFICACY – External Super</b> - Effective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support; - <b>Internal Super</b> - Effective management from internal superordinates (in sector)	113
13, 14, 16, 17	4	<b>IDLE EFFICACY - External Super</b> - Ineffective or minimal management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E; <u>not fully supported to implement AC:E</u> <b>Internal Super</b> - Ineffective or Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E; teacher not fully supported.	475
18	5	<b>BOLSTERED INTRINSIC SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Confident through PD and supports.	21
19 20	6	<b>NOMINAL SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Reduced or Working (minimal) without supports.	173
21	7	<b>SATIATED NEEDS</b> - Met - Supported.	39
22, 23, 24, 25, 26	8	<b>HOVERING NEEDS</b> - Not met - yet to be or noted Teachers cite need for – Professional support - <b>Focused support</b> – inform via intensive PD; - <b>General and retraining</b> – fill knowledge gaps.	569
27, 28, 36, 38, 39, 41	9	<b>MONITORED teacher agency</b> - Professional/guided or Restricted teacher autonomy; Exclusive – control of communication/ teacher agency;	103
29, 37, 40	10	<b>UNRESTRICTED teacher agency</b> –Minimal control of teacher autonomy; Inclusive – little or no control of communication/ teacher agency	36
30, 33	11	<b>Pragmatic Clarity</b> - External and Internal Effective; Manifestable.	102
31, 32, 34, 35	12	<b>RECONDITE Clarity</b> - External and Internal Minimal or Reduced	272
42, 44	13	<b>Practicable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload – <b>Moderate or Expected</b> - Little no increase	82
43	14	<b>Impracticable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload - <b>Major increase</b>	119
45, 47, 49	15	<b>Practicable Timeframe</b> - External and Internal Super – Acceptable or Practicable	131
46, 48	16	<b>Impracticable Timeframe</b> - External Super – Unacceptable, insufficient or Impracticable	145
5, 6	17	<b>CONTEXT impacts time</b> - Teaching experience	14
7		<b>ROLE</b> - Full <b>Time</b> some pressure but good <b>access</b> or awareness	9
8		<b>ROLE</b> - Internal Superordinate	11
9		<b>ROLE</b> - more roles is more <b>time</b> pressure	6
10		<b>ROLE</b> - PartTime less pressure but less <b>access</b>	4
11		<b>ROLE</b> - Subordinate - follows or answers to others	7
50, 51		<b>Workload</b> – Reform experience/fatigue - Experienced multiple reforms - Experienced few reforms	26



**Table 4.9 – Collapsing of focused codes to categories**

Table 4.9 – Collapsing of focused codes to categories

Focused codes		Categories			
FC#	Focused codes	Questionnaire and interview Code Count	C#	Category	Category count
1	<b>Problematic PERSPECTIVE</b> - Problematic for practise - Ambivalent or Unchallenged by, acquiescent of or endures change; affected by external factors - Perspective problematic for practise - Negative enhancement (combination of additional workload and confusion etc. problematic for professionalism if transition is not catered for).	214	1	<b>Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform</b>	319
2	<b>Progressive PERSPECTIVE</b> is affected by external factors - Progressive - Perspective progressive positive Collegiality where teachers see the AC implementation as an opportunity to improve practise and knowledge.	105			
3	<b>DYNAMIC EFFICACY</b> – <b>External Super</b> - Effective management from external superordinates (out of sector) - useful for teachers - certainty and support; - <b>Internal Super</b> - Effective management from internal superordinates (in sector)	113	2	<b>Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy</b>	588
4	<b>IDLE EFFICACY</b> - <b>External Super</b> - Ineffective or minimal management from external superordinates (out of sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E; <u>not fully supported to implement AC:E</u> <b>Internal Super</b> - Ineffective or Minimal management from internal superordinates (in sector) - inefficient for teachers - unassisted, uncertain of AC:E; teacher not fully supported.	475			
11	<b>Pragmatic</b> Clarity - External and Internal Effective	102	3	<b>Pragmatic and Recondite clarity</b>	374
12	<b>RECONDITE</b> Clarity - External and Internal Minimal or Reduced	272			
5	<b>BOLSTERED INTRINSIC SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Confident through PD and supports.	21	4	<b>Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy</b>	194
6	<b>NOMINAL SELF-EFFICACY</b> - Reduced or Working (minimal) without supports.	173			
9	<b>MONITORED teacher agency</b> - Professional/guided or Restricted teacher autonomy; Exclusive – control of communication/ teacher agency;	103	5	<b>Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency</b>	139
10	<b>UNRESTRICTED teacher agency</b> –Minimal control of teacher autonomy; Inclusive – little or no control of communication/ teacher agency	36			
7	<b>SATIATED NEEDS</b> - Met - Supported.	39	6	<b>Satiated and Hovering needs</b>	608
8	<b>HOVERING NEEDS</b> - Not met - yet to be or noted Teachers cite need for – Professional support - <b>Focused support</b> – inform via intensive PD; - <b>General and retraining</b> – fill knowledge gaps.	569			
13	<b>Practicable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload – <b>Moderate or Expected</b> - Little no increase	82	7	<b>Practicable workloads and timeframes</b>	477
14	<b>Impracticable workload</b> – Teacher - Time required for workload - <b>Major increase</b>	119			
15	<b>Practicable Timeframe</b> - External and Internal Super – Acceptable or Practicable	131			
16	<b>Impracticable Timeframe</b> - External Super – Unacceptable, insufficient or Impracticable	145			
17	<i>CONTEXT impacts time - Teaching experience</i>	14			
	<i>ROLE - Full Time some pressure but good access or awareness</i>	9			
	<i>ROLE - Internal Superordinate</i>	11			
	<i>ROLE - more roles is more time pressure</i>	6			
	<i>ROLE - PartTime less pressure but less access</i>	4			
	<i>ROLE - Subordinate - follows or answers to others</i>	7			
	<i>Workload – Reform experience/fatigue</i> - Experienced multiple reforms - Experienced few reforms	26			
				Not included as a theme – context reference  CONTEXTUAL facets - PRECIOUS TIME; count 77	

Table 4.10 – Collapsing of Categories to Themes

Categories			Axial codes/ Themes		
C#	Category	Category count	AC#	AXIAL CODE/ THEME	Axial code count
1	Problematic and Progressive perspectives of reform	319	1	PERSPECTIVES of REFORM	319
2	Dynamic and Idle superordinate efficacy	588	2	SYSTEMIC EFFICACY and CLARITY for REFORM	962
3	Pragmatic and Recondite clarity	374			
4	Bolstered and Nominal self-efficacy	194	3	TEACHER AGENCY and INDUCED SELF-EFFICACY	333
5	Monitored and Unrestricted teacher agency	139			
6	Satiated and Hovering needs	608	4	SATIATED and HOVERING NEEDS	608
7	Practicable workloads and timeframes	477	5	TIME FACTORS for TEACHERS	477
	Not included as a theme – context reference			CONTEXTUAL facets - PRECIOUS TIME	77

## Appendix C.6 Themes

Table 4.11 – Themes

Table 4.11 – Themes

THEMES		THEME COUNT
1	Perspectives of Reform	319
2	Systemic efficacy and clarity for reform	962
3	Teacher agency and induced self-efficacy	333
4	Satiated and hovering needs	608
5	Time factors for teachers	477

## Appendix D: Data excerpts

### D.1 Questionnaire

#### SECTION THREE – Short answers

34. How do you view curriculum change? Positively? Negatively? Why?

Positive. It seems that it is clear to the other English teachers at my school that it is a good curriculum to plan with.

35. How will you prepare professionally for the Australian Curriculum: English?

Work alongside the English team at [redacted] and work independently to plan my lessons to suit the AC.

36. How and where have you accessed information on the Australian Curriculum: English?

From the head of English at [redacted] and the internet.

34. How do you view curriculum change? Positively? Negatively? Why?

Positively - This has been the third curriculum change. Each one asks for teachers to refine practice & be accountable.

35. How will you prepare professionally for the Australian Curriculum: English?

I feel that I am prepared. I have been supported at my previous school, throughout work with the [SECTOR] and personal PL. This is in part through the additional work I do with [professional organisation] and the PL I am expected to deliver at my school.

37. What are your expectations around mandated curriculum change (level and type of support)?

My expectations around mandated curriculum change is that it is a holistic approach in regard to all of Australia. I find it quite overwhelming and rewarding of the changes we have made. More support from ACARA would be a benefit - even having a unit and rubric looked at would be great.

## D.2 Interview excerpts

9:07] We have a lot of teachers who had a very different grammar learning experience. I mean, those different types of sentences; I did quite well at uni but I didn't even know what made up a simple sentence. I was using all of these things without even knowing! Now we need to be aware of what they are and the students need to be able to identify it and. So Bev has been helping us with that. From what I understand, she is helping to construct the curriculum and what the kids need to know. [9:52] We went to her PDs last year, and she would GET us to deconstruct the curriculum, if you like. It's really good. It is hard to understand some things. Sometimes I will walk away, and it just goes really fast. There's a lot of information. Because we don't have a lot of time with her – just trying to squash everything in and understand. But that's ok. [10:46] SEE COLOUR COPY of Bev D's CHART. – What it is, is that each strand is covered in this. This is for a short story activity. [10:55] So, for examining literature, what you do is build the knowledge of field. SO, we review the story, discussion of themes, reading the story together for pleasure, looking at the mazes, talking, text structure and organisation. [11:09] The next thing we do is identify the main

### Example of NVivo coding of interview data

**P2:** At the moment I haven't swayed that much because I have come into it with my critical literacy eye, for me compared to newer teachers, it hasn't been a great jump – what I see is that the actual English curriculum itself, there is just so much in there. There's just so much in there. It just goes on infinitum. I don't know if it makes any sense – it just complicates everything. It actually does not simplify it. You cannot cover the complete curriculum.

**Researcher:** So you've been told where to source pl from, and you go and do that privately?

**P1:** Yeah, we've just tried to become a lot more collegial in here. And we're getting better at that. It hasn't been like all of these opportunities and places we could go and learn about the curriculum, unfortunately.

### D.3 Extant text review

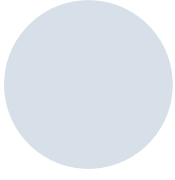


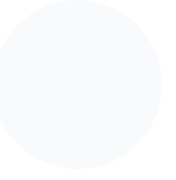
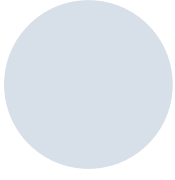


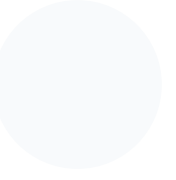
EXTANT TEXT ANALYSIS						
Document name (if applicable): Pages - English-Resources DoE						
Author: [REDACTED]						
Access: [REDACTED] staff login only. Restricted.						
<b>Document number:</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>Contextual Positioning</b> (Ralph et al 2014)			<b>Response to extant text by researcher</b>	
<b>National, State Or Tasmanian education sector (circle)</b>	<b>Bogdan &amp; Biklen– text type (circle)</b>	Context	Purpose	Questions		
National (ACARA)	Official	Who	To identify	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who participated in conceiving, supporting, shaping, writing, editing, and publishing the text?</li> </ul>	[REDACTED]	
EDUCATION SECTOR:						
[REDACTED]						
[REDACTED]	Popular culture	What	To define	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who was its production intended to benefit?</li> </ul>	DoE only staff. Restricted access.	
[REDACTED]	Personal			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What stated or assumed purposes does it serve?</li> </ul>	<p>"Tasmanian schools began implementation of Australian Curriculum: English from Prep to Year 10 in 2012. This means that English will be taught, assessed and reported upon using the national curriculum. Teachers are directed to the online version of the curriculum which is available at <a href="http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Curriculum/F-10">http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/English/Curriculum/F-10</a>. To receive updates about changes to this and other pages on the Curriculum Support Centre subscribe to the curriculum-share email forum."</p>	
<b>Further notes:</b>  Access login only.  Specific requirements of stakeholders may in fact improve teacher certainty of expectation, yet could also yield stress through time pressure. However, the freedom to choose delivery and content could produce more collaborative and suitable, meaningful education for students.				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What specific value does this text bring to the current study?</li> </ul>	Informs; efficacy.	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the parameters of the information?</li> </ul>	Exclusive.			
		When	To chronicle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When was the document conceived, produced, updated?</li> </ul>	Feb 2012?	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the document's intended lifespan?</li> </ul>	Ongoing.	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent are the issues that influenced and informed the production of this document relevant to the temporal context of the current study?</li> </ul>	Exclusive; direction for curriculum resources. Forum/email option gives collaborative option.	
		Where	To locate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where was the document produced?</li> </ul>	Tasmania	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where is the document intended for use?</li> </ul>	[REDACTED] schools.	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where is the document positioned in respect of sociological context?</li> </ul>	Exclusive – [REDACTED] only.	
		Why	To rationalize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why would the text be used?</li> </ul>	Support [REDACTED] stakeholders.	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Why, if at all, is the text unique, reliable, and consistent?</li> </ul>	Lists Tasmanian [REDACTED] collaboration option.	
How	To explain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How (if at all) do the authors of the text propose it be used?</li> </ul>	Stakeholder support.			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the text written?</li> </ul>	Simplified, formal.			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How is the document achieving its purpose?</li> </ul>	Provides link to forum.			

## Appendix E: Tables and Figures

### Appendix E.3.1 Chapter Three Tables

**Table 3.1 – Data collection sequence**

Table 3.1 – Data collection sequence

Data source	<div> <div>  <p><b>Initial contact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact directly with school sites and through TATE</li> <li>• Provision of information letters and consent forms, including questionnaire for perusal and or completion by participants</li> </ul> </div> <div>  <p><b>Questionnaires</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants returned these at different times, over eight months (participant time availability)</li> </ul> </div> <div>  <p><b>Interviews</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual , semi-structured interviews based on questionnaire responses, arranged according to participant availability/ workload</li> </ul> </div> <div>  <p><b>Extant texts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant documents sourced during 2011-2015 to align with participant perspectives divulged in questionnaire and interview responses.</li> </ul> </div> </div>			
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<b>DATE</b>				
<b>2013</b>				
April	•			
May	•			•
June	•	•		•
July		•		•
August		•		•
September		•		•
October		•		•
November		•		•
December		•		•
<b>2014</b>				
January		•		•
February		•		•
March		•		•
April			•	•
May			•	•
June				•
July			•	•
August			•	•
September			•	•
October			•	•
November				•
December				•
<b>Jan 2015</b>				•
<b>-Dec 2015</b>				

## Appendix E.4.1 Chapter Four Figures

**Figure 4.5 Example of coding**

QUESTION Response: Please mark the corresponding box with an 'X'.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure (need Qn. clarification)
26	As a Tasmanian English teacher my voice is heard by superordinate stakeholders (school management, the government, etc.).				X		
27	The teacher's voice is respected and acted on in decision-making/reform periods in general.				X		
28	I was consulted effectively about the Australian Curriculum: English.			X			

Figure 4.5. Example of coding for Unrestricted teacher agency

**Figure 4.7 Example of coding**

QUESTION Response: Please mark the corresponding box with an 'X'.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Unsure (need Qn. clarification)
25	I feel under pressure during education reform/curriculum change.			X			

Figure 4.7. Example of coding for 'Practicable workload' – teacher perceives some pressure to work under a new curriculum.